ON THE NATURE OF THE SOUL

COMPENDIUM

…...in Jewish tradition called ‘nefesh’. In Christian circles it is called the ‘vis animæ inferior’. We might call the personal soul supernatural, also called ‘neshama’, from the Hebrew for ‘breath’, which is meant to become one with God.

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Vassula's writings entitled "True Life in God" (TLIG) speak constantly of God offering the world the grace of divinisation, which means to make humans into gods by participation in the Divinity of the Godhead. This concept can cause alarm unless people realise that it is another term for being gifted with eternal life in God. It is the eternal life of God, and in and through God that will be given to us.

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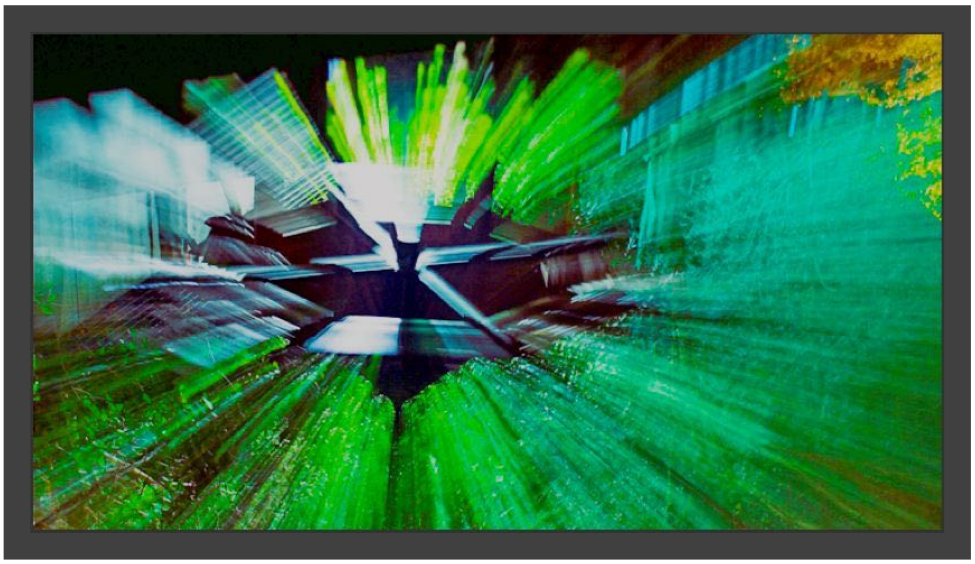
PART 1 – Ch.1

On the Nature of the Soul



Here follows in outline a contemporary adaptation of the philosophy of nature as taught at the cathedral schools and medieval universities. Under the influence of modern scientific thinking, in place of this philosophy, which was truly a philosophy of life, arose the concept of the soulless universe, and that is something we resolutely distance ourselves from.

1 – The specific and the personal soul

According to Michael Stebbins in the HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism:

> «« …the notion of soul that has predominated in Catholic theology since the late thirteenth century is that of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). Following Aristotle, he conceived of soul in general as the pattern of interrelatedness (substantial form) that integrates the many parts and processes of an organism into a functioning whole. In human beings, this integrating or formal element, according to Thomas, manifests itself in several orders of activity, from the vegetative up to the order of activity of rational thinking. In this view, the human soul is naturally and intrinsically related to the body; therefore it is not a spiritual captive in a material prison. »»

Each human being has but one soul, which does not contradict the notion that before the infusion of the immortal soul into the foetus there might have existed a mortal soul. We may presume that at the infusion of the immortal soul the mortal fuses instantaneously into the immortal to become one indivisible soul. That a (mortal) soul exists in the human embryo as from conception relates to morphogenesis, as the creation of form and image typically belong to the realm of subconsciousness (the modern term for soul). Understandably, within the one immortal soul, built up from two components – the animalistic species and the supernatural (Gen. 1:27, 3:21) – contradictory tendencies emerge. However, these can be coped with through willpower and the indispensable ingredient of divine grace. We can call the mortal component the ‘specific

soul' and the immortal one 'personal soul', for the former distinguishes between the collective (from which it is drawn) and its specific field of activity, whereas the second stresses the importance of free will and the qualities of self-consciousness and rational thinking.

2 – Materialistic metaphors fall short

Any form of life, including the vegetative, should have an active or specific component as counterpart to the reactive collective, in order to act adequately on the different levels of being, levels which include the ecological, metabolic, immunological, perceptive, instinctive, latent and adaptive levels, comprised by the term 'hypnotic connectivity'. We could also imagine conditions where the relation has been reversed and the collective subconscious will be the active ingredient, having clothed itself with a personality.

By 'form of life' I mean something very large that includes sub-units or sub-systems which, according to the holistic principle, have been split off from a collectivity. Holistic means that the relation between collectivity and specificity is reciprocal: the collectivity may be seen as a unit, just like its underlying specificity, and yet the two cannot be separated. After all, the specific is as essential to an explanation of the whole as the whole is to an explanation of the specific. For this kind of structure materialistic metaphors fail to give a satisfactory understanding. The foregoing matches up wonderfully well with the theological concept of the three-in-one God, for just as God is simultaneously trinitary and absolutely unique, the multiplicity and unicity in the surrounding world do not represent a contradiction since they are both image of and participation in the divine.

Thus, one can speak of the soul of a white blood cell, but also of the soul of an organ (such as the liver), a plant, or of a population. A population of bees, for instance, acts as an organism as from thirty individuals (Lavie and Roth). This approach fits very well with the definition of 'morphic fields' from British botanist Rupert Sheldrake as he explains in "The Presence of the Past". He views morphic fields as a matrix or vast interconnecting web applicable to entire ecosystems as well as to their underlying species, to species as well as their subdivisions, and to subdivisions as well as individuals, and finally to individuals and their living components. Even he does not disregard inorganic matter in the form of total planets and galactic systems. He considers morphic fields as a resonant organism that, unhindered by time and space, encompasses the entire spectrum of the universe. This idea is similar to the concept of the reticulum dei (the divine network), which will be further elaborated in the Appendix that discusses group-think.

3 – The difference between biological and human intelligence

The specific soul is the animalistic or natural form of awareness, called 'nefesh' in the Jewish tradition. In Christian circles also called the 'vis animæ inferior'. The personal soul we might call supernatural or the 'vis animæ superior'. The Jewish tradition calls this 'neshama', from the Hebrew word for 'breath'. The ruach or 'spirit' is a corollary (natural consequence) of the neshama and conversely, the human neshama is a corollary of God's Spirit. When someone says: "An animal has no soul", he means that an animal has no soul in the exalted sense of the word soul; and really, the difference between the animalistic soul and the divine is so great that this statement cannot be termed incorrect. However, our approach here emphasizes the similarity between the two, which fits the Biblical usage of nefesh – meaning 'soul' or 'breathing creature', as well as fish or spirit.

That nefesh does not refer to the immortal soul is evident from the use of this term in the Bible. In Genesis 2:7, where in the encounter with the divine presence the neshama or breath of life is breathed into what was to become Adam, the result is that the nefesh (corpse or creature) comes to life. Nefesh is derived from the Hebrew for 'to abide'. In Genesis 1:24, where animals are mentioned, nefesh is translated as creature, and in Leviticus 21:11, where a human corpse is mentioned, it is translated as body: *"do not touch a dead body".* As long as a human has not restored the bond with his creator, the soul may be immortal, but because the life 'in' the Holy Spirit is absent, this human is thrown back upon his own 'spirit' and he can thus be considered dead, a nefesh, albeit of a special kind. The self-contained soul is like a cup without content; in French they say "un contenant sans contenu". Says Psalm 23, pointing to our final destination: *"With oil Thou shalt anoint my head, and then my cup shall overflow."*

Together with the physical 'gestalt', the specific soul (nefesh) represents the biological intelligence, which man has in common with animals and which he deploys to regulate bodily processes and corporeal things, and to meet his temporal needs. As far as temporal earthliness is concerned, man, thrown back on his own matter-oriented mind, has reached the point where he thinks that that temporal is all for which he exists, and which has to be subdued in a never ending struggle for life. Oh, wretched man! How to deliver him from this cesspool of misery and sorrow?

It was only after Christ' work of atonement that the way was cleared again for union with God's Spirit (the Holy Spirit), and thus the amazing occurred, of God who thereby 'reproduced' in this man something that was already intended from the creation of Adam and Eve, but was unfortunately blocked by the transgression of the commandment. And through that blocking, man was thrown back upon himself, upon his own intellect, living in a material world, with no view of the Heavenly except through the eyes of faith, verily, a difficult exercise. Like Cain, he became a wanderer, deprived of God, though never completely.[1)] How else could we withstand the attacks and evil inspirations of the Evil One? Real life is life in, through and with God, something enviabler, even by angels. What an unsurpassable destination of which no human being, even the greatest saint, has ever been capable to form an accurate idea, so much elevated above what we experience in this valley of tears.

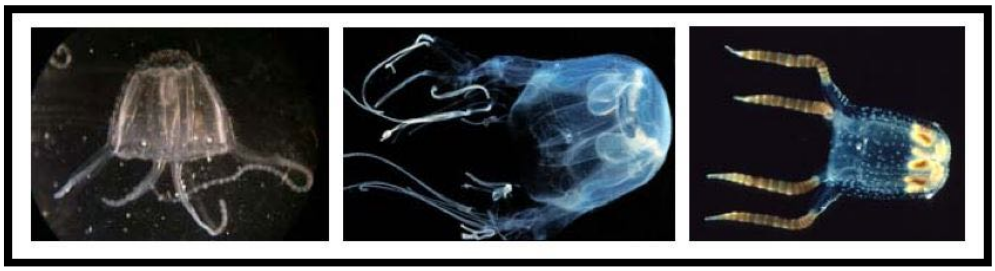
As for the regulation of bodily processes, we know that this is done through the DNA, the book of life, a book, because the four nucleotides that make up the DNA in a seemingly infinite sequence are actually four letters. The words of these 'letters' are the instructions, but it takes an intermediary to read them and implement them, and that intermediary is the soul. It is for this reason that from the moment of conception, every life – from the smallest bacteria to the complex animals – requires at each step a separate soul in order to accomplish this amazing feat.

That a cell has a soul from its earliest stage of life in order to be able to read and initiate the instructions of the DNA, implicates that every reactive cell, in for instance the human body, has a separate soul, exception made of the unfertilized ovocyte (egg), for otherwise it would develop into a new life form via mitosis (cell division). An ovocyte is therefore a dead body – to be brought to life. The same can be said of a DNA-virus that only comes to life once it has penetrated a cell and starts to mess up with the already present genetic material. Basically, something is dead if it has no soul. It is rather silly to claim, what is generally accepted today, that a person is dead if his brain

1) The Holy Spirit addresses our conscience, a conscience that has already been inscribed with the natural law as from our first breath (the Ten Commandments). The Holy Spirit also whispers goodness in each individual and comforts us in this world of mud and sorrow. Of course, God has also given his angels who are there to assist us.

shows no demonstrable activity, a rule introduced solely for the purpose of harvesting living organs, to be used for transplants. As for spermatozoa, I tend to think that a mature spermatozoon is a full-grown living entity and, unlike an ovocyte, possesses a soul of its own, perhaps infused at the first onset of spermatogenesis.

There is no direct causal relationship between the DNA/RNA and its manifestations, any more than there is a direct relationship between an instruction booklet for building a plane model and its final result; it is the builder who reads the booklet and follows the instructions that brings it about. It also becomes clear now why human life begins at the penetration of the plasma membrane by the spermatozoon (I will return to this later). At this precise moment the soul is infused, which happens prior to the moment of conception. Conception itself is a wonderful and directed series of events. The 'inter-action' between the sperm and the plasma membrane of the ovocyte (egg), and not the subsequent fertilization, stimulates development into an embryo. Indeed, it is the soul that initiates and directs this sequence of events. And therefore the penetration of the membrane determines the moment of the infusion of the soul (the vis animæ inferior).



The extremely toxic Chironex Fleckeri or box jellyfish (Cubozoan), prevalent in the waters of northern Australia, is a fine example of biological intelligence. A jellyfish sits on the threshold from plant to animal life. This species has 24 appendages, united in clusters of six, one on each side of its cuboid body. Each cluster contains two types of organs – four simple pits plus two sophisticated eyes that anatomically resemble the human eye, with a lens, a retina, and a cornea that distinguishes colors. The pits are basic light-sensing devices similar to those found in the common jellyfish. The eyes, however, are something quite different. They display an excellent ability to perceive distinct objects – to be aware of them – and act accordingly. Yet the creature has absolutely no brain! Each cluster of appendages has a dense node of nerve cells behind it, but that is all. How the sometimes conflicting information is integrated to elicit the correct action is anyone's guess. Since images on the living retina can be conceived as self-contained thoughts, it seems to me that no brain is required to process them. The processing unit could very well be the incorporeal (sub)consciousness (as an exponent of the soul) for which images are the primary means of communication. Descartes motto therefore becomes "video ergo sum", or "I see, therefore I am" (instead of: I think therefore I am).

The foregoing begs the question: "Can the human brain explain the superiority of the human mind?" Utterly out of the question! In 1972, Robert Kuhn published a series of articles on this topic, entitled: "Why the vast difference between animal brain and human mind?" He writes: [2)]

> «« Only recently have the multiple academic disciplines composing brain research acquired the full range of information necessary to properly evaluate the human brain. (…) The slim superiority of the human brain structure over that of the animal, whether cetacean or primate,[3)] cannot possibly account for the unbridgeable gulf that exists between the uniquely unrestrained human mind and (highly) (…) instinctive animal brain. Therefore, a NON-physical additive must augment the human brain, converting it into the human mind, since no physical component exists that can account for it. [He makes the

> pertinent remark] that the self-consciousness of man may not at first seem to be very different from the consciousness of animals, but this difference is perhaps the most crucial distinction between the human mind and animal brain. »»

The conclusion is thus justified that the brain does not do the thinking itself, but that the neshama does so, who thinks through the brain. Thus, as an intellectual activity, man thinks 'by' the soul 'via' the brain, just as man sees 'by' the soul 'via' the eyes (through the eyes, therefore, we can look back to one's soul). God has no brain and no eyes and yet God can think and see. After death, therefore, the immortal human soul, separated from the body, can also 'continue' to think and see. Needless to say that in the spectrum of the intellectual versus the instinctive, a human is primarily intellectual and the animal instinctive. The intellectual represents the capacity of logical thinking and of developing new thoughts. The brilliant neshama, which is peculiar to man, is endowed with a mind capable of the intellectual: through observation, input from our environment is preserved and then worked out by the intellect into new combinations, known as tools, utensils, vehicles, dwellings and the like, which animals are incapable of, even if they had brains more capable than of the human. As for the other end of the spectrum, Prof. Erich Blechschmidt describes innate instincts as: [4)]

> «« …reactions that have developed from embryonic beginnings. Because something that has not been unconsciously initiated by the body in its early development cannot be expressed subsequently – whether consciously or

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2) These articles by Robert L. Kuhn appeared in "The Plain Truth" from the Ambassador College Press, Pasadena Californië # Jan. to June issues 1972 (quotes Febr. p. 24, May p. 29, June p. 40). This magazine was published by the "Worldwide Church of God" (Restored Church of God) directed by Herbert W. Armstrong (1892-1986), who proclaimed Christian views that are undisputably sectarian.

A very interesting article providing an overview of the state of the neuro sciences, comparing man and animal, is by Douglas Fox: "The Limits of Intelligence – The laws of physics may well prevent the human brain from evolving into an ever more powerful thinking machine" - Scientific American # July 2011 (pp. 21-27). His conclusions much agree with those of Robert Kuhn.

3) In the early 1980s Charles Sibley and Jon Ahlquist established an incredibly low 1.6% discrepancy between the human and the chimpanzee genomes (genetic make-up), which proves that a chimpanzee is genetically more closely related to the human than to any other primate, which in later studies was narrowed to 1.2% in terms of single nucleotide changes. The international Chimpanzee Sequencing and Analysis Consortium found in 2005 that duplications and rearrangements of larger DNA stretches add another 2.7% difference. The similarity, which lies in between 96.1 and 98.8%, reveals to some people the shocking fact that no ape is closer to the chimpanzee than a human. On this basis humans and chimps are closer genetically than two hard-to-distinguish bird species like the red-eyed and the white-eyed vireo, who are different by a mere 2.9%. The famous Jane Goodall, who started to study the chimpanzee mind in the wild, once said: "Of course humans are unique, but we are not as different as we used to think." In 1990 the biologist Vincent Sarich concluded on the basis of blood samples that humans and chimpanzees are as similar as "two subspecies of gophers living on opposite sides of the Colorado River".

The last remarks are grossly exaggerated. This genetic resemblance between the chimpanzee and the human being is more apparent than real and more sentimental than biological: a liana growing along a river bank has never constructed a Roman aqueduct. In Canada, notably, a team headed by Professor Calarco has in fact demonstrated that the proteins of genes carried by the chromosomes are not expressed in the same way in the human and in the monkey. Human RNA (ribonucleic acid), which determines protein synthesis, cannot be compared to simian RNA. In brief, contrary to appearances, Man does not descend from monkeys...

4) "Wie beginnt das menschliche Leben", Erich Blechschmidt - Christiana Verlag, Stein am Rhein, Switzerland # 1976.

> instinctively. (…) The much quoted clasping reflex of the newborn illustrates at a later stage the characteristically human growth grasping executed at an early embryonic age, though not yet fully developed. It is not an atavistic process. »»

That the clasping reflex has been exercised during early development in the womb does not prove that it is without atavism (wikipedia: an ancestral adopted characteristic that for its expression does not need exercise), for atavisms such as the hunting instinct demand exercise to reach full maturity. These talents are rudimentarily available and progressively express themselves more clearly. Blechschmidt observed the formative causation of the developing human body. But we may assume that those causal laws are also applicable to talents (behavioral patterns and abilities), for do not both form and talent belong to the same subconscious realm? How could it be otherwise? So, it seems reasonable that similar mechanisms pertain to the development of behaviour. I would like to draw your attention to the marvellous talent of babies to learn language, which is decidedly atavistic. And what about the mating behavior of many animal species and the talent of birds to build a nest without exercise? It is true that if a small child is not exposed to spoken language, at a later stage it will never be able to learn human spoken language, but once it has started to learn language it will need many years of practice to reach linguistic proficiency. This means that environmental factors stimulate the development of what is already innately present and should do so within the appropriate time window. In short, exercise and atavism can go together very well.

That the manifestation of behaviour and outer form belong to the soul or the subconscious realm, means that the DNA does not give a clue as to its expression, although degeneracy in the genetic code can also account for bodily malformations and loss of talents. Whatever, it seems impossible to establish a causal link of behaviour and outer form to a specific DNA sequence. And believe me, they have tried! A human being is a totality and therefore what exists in the form – relating to the spirit – is also a reflection of the DNA, despite the fact that a form, such as the nose, cannot be traced to a specific DNA sequence. The most obvious is the outward manifestation of the male / female, which situates itself in a continious range, regardless of whether someone is a man or a woman, as a man (XY chromosome) can look in many aspects very feminine and a woman (XX) very masculine. Remarkably, an awful lot of men today are very feminine and women very masculine, which reminds me of the line: *"There will come a time when the men are weak, the women are shameless, and the trees fruitless."* Otto Weininger published a seminal work, "Sex and Character" (Geschlecht und Charakter), with Viennese publisher Braumüller in 1903, in an attempt to cast gender relations in a new light. At the beginning of Ch. 5 he says: *"In view of the admitted close correspondence between matter and mind, we may expect to find that the conception of sexually intermediate forms, if applied to mental facts, will yield a rich crop of results. The existence of a female mental type and a male mental type can readily be imagined (and the quest of these types has been made by many investigators), but such perfect types never occur as actual individuals, simply because in the mind, as in the body, all sorts of sexually intermediate conditions exist."* The Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev claimed for this work that *"after Nietzsche nothing was so remarkable in this [modern German] and volatile culture."* (Die Fackel, 1903) It received a glowing review from Swedish writer August Strindberg, who wrote that it had *"probably solved the hardest of all problems, the woman problem."* (Mack 2003, p. 104) Sex and Character argues that all human beings are composed of a mixture of male and female substance – appearance and character – and that mutual sexual attraction unconsciously tries to complement what is missing in such a way as to obtain a complete spectrum. Ideally, added up together both constitute a complete human being. With poor complementarity, marriage will be less than convenient. Homosexuality is thus not innate, but the reflection of beings complementing each other, for both partners have drifted in their emotional substance outside the normal gender identity (normal in the mathema-

tical sense). In a manner of speaking, both are in the middle region and therefore add up to one. It does not necessarily follow in such a case that the partners must be of the same gender; the counterpart could just as easily be someone from the other gender who is also outside the norm. I know of a happily married couple of whom the man is extremely feminine and his wife extremely masculine. Previously, he was married to a 'normal' woman; his children refused to see him after he had decided to marry that other woman. What a tragedy, based on mere misunderstandings!

4 – The infusion of the human soul

Assuming different components of the soul, we may assume that at the very moment of conception the temporal specific (de vis animæ inferior) is infused in the human zygote after the vis animæ inferior was separated from the collective, to agglomerate again in case of a premature death (more than 50% of fertilised ova abort spontaneously).[5)] Only at a later stage the evolving human life will be elevated to its sublime status at the moment of infusion of the personal soul (the vis animæ superior/neshama), which retains its integrity after death. The two, the inferior and the superior have become one, after having fused into each other. This course of events is imperative for the perishable can never bring forth the imperishable. This is the only conclusion because human conception and its continued development take place even if the immortal human souls, those of the progenitors, were to oppose it in terms of will. It follows that the infusion of the immortal into the mortal is an act of God. We, as the faithful, are not free to believe differently, because the encyclical Humani Generis from 1950 states that *"the Catholic faith obliges us to hold that [immortal] souls are directly created by God"*. (§ 36) Non-belief in a personal God, such as understood within the Judeo-Christian tradition, leads to a devaluation of the exalted position of human life, with all the undesirable effects that this thinking brings about.

I would now like to draw your attention to a message that God entrusted to his spokeswoman known by the acronym J.N.S.R. In her daily life she is a housewife living in France, and the letters J.N.S.R. stand for "Je ne suis rien" or "I am nothing", but also "Jésus notre Seigneur revient" or "Jesus our Lord returns". In the messages following the "Secret of Mary", on 20th June 2006 the following is written:

> «« At your birth on Earth [at the moment of infusion] your visible body is united to its double, which is destined to live for all Eternity with your God. (…) It is in view of your birth on Earth [which will be your second birth, your incarnation] that the two bodies are joined. Your God, generous and good, will entrust this marvellous spiritual body, come from Heaven, Gift of God, to this body of flesh given by the flesh. The parents can say: "You are flesh of my flesh" but never "Your spirit is the work of my spirit". And even your flesh, by the Grace of God if you'll pay attention to Me, is going to become more and more spiritual, that is: more spirit than flesh. »»

The renowned Maria Valtorta (1897-1961) left thousands of pages of dictation that she received directly from Jesus Christ. In her dictation of March 10, 1945, she says the following, endorsing that the immortal human soul is infused sometime during pregnancy:

> «« When my mother [the most holy Virgin] bore Me when she was pregnant with Me, being God, she went – because she is the humble and loving one – to

5) The sperm cell or spermatozoon can also be seen as a living being with its own vis animæ inferior. When the gametes fuse together, which is conception, it forms a unicellular zygote which in turn has its own vis animæ inferior.

> the mother of John [the Baptist] to serve her. She was her maternal cousin and pregnant in old age. **The Baptist already possessed his [immortal] soul because he was in the seventh month of formation.** And the seed of [what was to become a mature] man, enclosed in his mother's womb, leaped up with joy when it heard the voice of the Bride of God. Forerunner, even in this, he advanced the redeemed, for from womb to womb grace poured forth and thus penetrated [into John]. Thereby the hereditary debt of the child's soul disappeared. Therefore I [Jesus Christ] say that on earth there are three who possess wisdom: the Word, the Mother and the Forerunner, just as in Heaven there are three who are wisdom: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. »»

The foregoing is not against the teachings of the Church, because no pope has infallibly declared the point at which the immortal soul is infused in a body. The Church Fathers generally believed that the soul is infused at some time after the creation of the body, exception made for the Incarnation of Christ. At the very instant of the annunciation by the angel (Luke 1:35), when the Holy Ghost overshadowed the VIRGIN, her human germ came to development (insofar 'development' is a correct word) as to produce the terms in which the body and soul, a SOUL that was united to its Divinity, could be merged in the hypostatic union. That's the way the eternal WORD became flesh. According to the visions of Abbess Maria Cecilia Baij OSB (1694-1766), whose writings were published on the initiative of Pope Benedict XV (1914-1922), the body of our redeemer existed in miniature form as from conception. ("The Inner Life of Jesus" Ch. 1) Hence, at no time was Christ's body incomplete and void of Divinity, except when He died at the Cross when his soul was momentarily separated, whereas divine intervention secured that – until the time of the resurrection – his dead body was preserved against decay. The Catechism of Trent teaches the same (art. 3):

> «« What surpasses the order of nature and human comprehension is, that as soon as the Blessed Virgin assented to the announcement of the Angel in these words: *"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word",* the most sacred body of Christ was immediately formed, and to it was united a rational soul enjoying the use of reason; and thus in the same instant of time He was perfect God and perfect human. That this was the astonishing and admirable work of the Holy Ghost cannot be doubted; for according to the order of nature the rational soul is united to the body only after a certain lapse of time. Again – and this should overwhelm us with astonishment – as soon as the soul of Christ was united to his body, the Divinity became united to both; and thus at the same time his body was formed and animated, and the Divinity united to body and soul. Hence, at the same instant He was perfect God and a perfect human, and the most Holy Virgin, having at the same instant conceived God and human, is truly and properly called Mother of God and man. »» See also the Appendix.

On June 7, 2008 J.N.S.R. received a more precise theological explanation in "This Double Body that God has given us":

> «« Our soul, this second body, and our spirit which animates it, are identified by St Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:23: *"May the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless at the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ."* It is our soul that animates our *"lowly body"* says St Paul *"that it may be conformed to his glorious Body."* Philippians 3:20-21: *"For us, our Homeland is in Heaven, whence comes the Saviour we are ardently waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transfigure our wretched body in order that it may conform to his Glorious Body, by that Power by which He has to subdue all things to Himself."* »»

5 – The exalted position of Man

Faith in the unique and unparalleled exaltedness of every human being, as intended in God's loving plan of creation, is a greater act of faith than merely believing in God, because the latter does not tell much about who this God actually is in his relationship to us. Although, as we have just seen, the beginning of human life does not require a supernatural intervention (according to the current definition of supernatural), we have to accept that a 'human' soul exists from the moment of conception, because the purpose of becoming a human exists from the very beginning. In "The Secret of Light" Walter Russel formulates it as follows (Ch. 13): *"A man begins to express the idea of being Man as from a single cell. The whole idea of Man is in that single cell. It then unfolds in ordely time and space according to cosmic law. (...) Every action of unfolding man is a part of the unfolding of the Man-idea as it exists as a whole in God's Mind."* The encyclical Donum Vitæ correctly says: *"Human life is sacred [and so is the human body], because from its very beginning, it encompasses God's creating act and keeps a special bond with the Creator forever, its sole purpose"*, to which I might add: because, after all, He has the first paternity. (Gen. 4:1) The human father (the progenitor) thus has a derived paternity and not the other way round. The interconnections between the human collectivity and the vis animæ, as expounded previously, leaves untouched the fact that humanity belongs to a special class, which calls for great respect, a statement that has become even more true after the grafting in of the Anointing.[6] Thus, from the very beginning, the embryo possesses a sublime personality that is 'entitled' to our protection, a personality in the sense that it tries to keep its individuality, albeit that in the initial stage this personality is mainly derived from the collectivity. It is only later, after about four months, that the balance intended by God is brought about between the collective and individual personæ. All this is extremely complex, yet who would dare say that life, especially human life, is not complex?

The seraphic virgin Catherine of Siena (1347-1380), a proclaimed doctor of the Church, has written extensively on the soul and its creation by God the Father, to be found in "The Dialogue", in which she writes:

> «« Man is placed above all creatures, and not beneath them, and he cannot be satisfied or content except in something greater than himself. Greater than himself there is nothing but Myself, the Eternal God. Therefore I alone can satisfy him, and, because he is deprived of this satisfaction by his guilt, he remains in continual torment and pain. Weeping follows pain, and when he begins to weep, the wind strikes the tree of self-love, which he has made the principle of all his being. »»

The sanctification and heavenly calling of human existence and the body that sustains it, cries out for reverence and protection, from beginning to end, from the circumstances of the procreative act to the burial of the bodily remains. It also calls for self-restraint and dignified behaviour, in particular during sexual intercourse, for otherwise the personal souls (of the partners) are reduced to their instinctive condition, or in Biblical terms: become subservient to the flesh (here flesh is equal to biological intelligence). Why in particular during sexual intercourse? Because misguided sexuality means a defilement of the spirit as the two shall become one flesh. (Gen. 2:24) In his homily of Sunday Oct. 15th 2000, Pope John Paul II commented on this verse:

> «« The Biblical term flesh not only recalls the corporal nature of man, but his whole identity of body and soul. What the spouses accomplish is not only a union of their bodies, but a true association of their person, an association that is so deeply entrenched that up to a certain extent it makes of them a

6) Christ means 'The Anointed One'. He is also called the second Adam, who was the first anointed one and the first man in the most exalted sense of the word.

> [continuing] historical reflection of the 'We' of the three divine Persons. »» (Letter to the Families, n°8 # 1994)

This explains why the corruption of the sexual parental faculty is not without consequence for the offspring. This is well adressed in Jesus' message to JNSR:

> «« The women bring their children to this world, the fruit of the Love of the father and the mother. But I ask you at present: how is that fruit? Are they born from the Love already consecrated to God? NO! You have forgotten Me and my souls do not know Me. You have betrayed the true Love and distorted the mutual Love of the couple, which, in the sight of God, is degraded to the level of the animal. And the child looses its innocence as soon as it reaches the age where its senses awaken, as with the animal. »» (Dec. 20th 1999)

In the Letter to the Families is mentioned that what the spouses accomplish is not merely a union of their bodies, but a true union of their persons, a union so profound that it makes them to some extent a historical reflection of the 'We' of the three divine Persons. Some might read into this the deification of bodily union, as in vogue in the sexual excesses of the pagan mystery services. However, the emphasis here is on the union of the 'person', the bodily union being subsidiary. What is missing from this concept is that the union of person to person can only come to its ful potential at the restoration of the paradisiacal state. To some extent, indeed, but extremely deficiently, the union of man and woman already now reflects the 'We' of the three divine Persons. Physiologically, in the restored paradisiacal state the partners will also know a bodily union, but the hormonal impulses will then have become subordinate to his will, and not the other way around. In a self-willed appropriation of the sexual act, when Adam was still the Anointed One, something went terribly wrong, causing the animalistic instincts or urges to prevail in the inherited interrelationship. It was not meant to be that way, and therefore the Biblical 'becoming one flesh' should be seen primarily in its spiritual dimension. The saying in the Letter to the Families is therefore primarily a prophetic testimony. The germ for that kind of experience exists, is encapsulated, but that is all that can be said. In human experience, the physical aspect should be a means, not an end, for then it is equivalent to masturbation in its sense of self-gratification. Here a comment is appropriate: the physical is part of our earthly existence, but it must find its place in the restored paradisiacal state before humanity can speak of a true renewal of the relationship between man and woman. The restored paradisiacal state is achieved for all humankind, but only at the advent of the seventh day of creation. The end of the Bible agrees with the end of the sixth day of creation. About the seventh, only sparse details are given. God speaks about it as a new day of rest for his children, who can then rest as God rests from his own works. (Heb. 4:8-10) Afterwards, from the 8th day, a new octave will begin on the cosmic keyboard.

6 – A complete blueprint of the body

As regards the precise moment of 'personal' ensoulment I propose the following line of reasoning. In view of the ingraining of form into the soul we should expect that the 'personal' ensoulment will only take place at the stage when the morphological appearance of the unborn baby closely resembles the full-grown human body, thus after roughly four months. The beginning happens to coincide with the synchronization of the hearts of both mother and child! The Fifth Lateran Council (1512-1517) states that the soul *"is (...) truly in itself and essentially the form of the human body, as was defined in the canon of Pope Clement V, our predecessor of happy memory, published at the Council of Vienne."* [7)]

7) Fifth Lateran Council, Session 8, The Human Soul, nr. 481 # 8-19 Dec. 1513.

If the baby should die immediately afterwards, then the soul disposes in its final destiny of a complete blueprint of the body. (1 Cor. 15:44) What kind of destiny I do not know, but I do know that they are the beloved of the Heavenly Father. Read somewhere that after a baby dies his soul will assume in Heaven the bodily form it would have had if it had reached 33 years. A nice thought.

The Greek Bible translation from the fourth century before Christ, the so-called Septuagint, gives in the Exodus 21:22-25 text an interesting point of departure for the establishment of the moment of personal ensoulment, of which a usual translation: *"If two men fight and smite a woman with child, so that she is having a miscarriage (a spontaneous abortion) and* ***no mischief*** *follows, the rival shall be forced to pay a penalty – as the husband may lay upon him and as established in court, but* ***if mischief*** *follows he shall give life for life, eye for eye and tooth for tooth."* The Septuagint adapts this obscure text with an interpretation that supposedly runs parallel with the Jewish tradition at the time: [8] *"If two men fight and smite a woman with child, so that her child* ***be born imperfectly formed****, the rival shall be forced to pay a penalty - as the husband may lay upon him and as established in court, but if it* ***be perfectly formed****, he shall give life for life, eye for eye and tooth for tooth."* Perfectly formed or 'expressed in form' is after the Greek 'exeikonismenon', which accords roughly with 4 months pregnancy.

The often quoted principle of functionality that would determine the moment of ensoulment is of no importance. What counts is the form of the body, not its functionality (for example, of the brain structure), because a natural body exists as well as a spiritual one. Each has its own functionality, but both have the same form, not necessarily exactly identical but it will be recognizable. Some readers may be surprised that the form of the body ingrains in the soul. Well, has not the Church always taught that an organic unity exists between body and soul? The soul or spirit is not trapped in a bodily prison, but it remains wedded to the body, even after the material appearance of its form has been shaken off in what is called death. Our appearance after death resembles what the carnal body once was. Yet, why do we speak of spirit AND soul? The physician Ruud van der Ven has defined this beautifully:

> «« Spirit and soul partly overlap, but they also have something of their own. The soul is man's 'inward looking self'. Spirit is man's 'outward looking self', the aspect of his humanity by which he communicates and makes contact with God – or with 'spiritual powers' other than God – and with people. »» ("Orgaan Donatie" (donation of organs), p. 150 # 2022)

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8) The halakhic status of an embryo/fetus depends upon the stage of its development. Most of the Talmudic references to ensoulment (infusion of the neshamah) are of a homiletic nature in which this is assumed to occur at conception. (B. Sanhedrin 91b, B. Niddah 31a) Nevertheless, the tradition recognizes that the infusion of the neshamah may simply refer to a biological vitalizing factor or some level of biological life, instead of granting the embryo already then the status of a human being. During the first forty days [after conception], the embryo was considered at the time as merely 'water'; as from day forty-one until the pregnancy it was to be considered a doubtful embryo/fetus [meaning: 'we don't know' its exact status during the time following]. (M. Niddah 3:7) And yet, a pregnancy was not even 'recognized' as such until the completion of three months (M. Niddah 1:4; T. Niddah 1:7), [which throws some light on the question]. An aborted product that does not have the shape of a human being, was not construed as a fetus. And [such an abortion] was not seen as causing bodily impurity [- a different way of saying that it is no sin]. (M. Niddah 3:2) Rabbinic sources include disputes about what constitutes human form (T. Niddah 4:5,7; B. Niddah 23b), focusing most often on facial features. From: "The Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women" - topic "Abortion: Halakhic Perspectives", by Tirzah Meacham (leBeit Yoreh) and Yoelit Lipinsky (last updated July 27, 2022).

7 – Drawn from nought

Jewish tradition subscribes to the belief in the pre-creation of the immortal and innocent souls, supposed to have been created at the beginning of the universe and ever since awaiting the infusion of each one into a body. See for that matter Nishmat Hayyim, "On the nature of the soul", by the famous Amsterdam scholar Manasseh Ben Israel (1604-1657), a good friend of Rembrandt. The great Hebraist Origen (185 – ca. 254) believed in the pre-creation of souls in a system of thought that is now considered heretical – but this does not make him a heretic in everything else (Origen *"certainly occupies a pre-eminent place (…) in the evolution of Christian theology."* (Encyclical Fides et Ratio, nº 39) Thomas Aquinas assumes in his "Summa Contra Gentiles" (II 83-89) that a soul and a body start their existence simultaneously which, I would like to point out, does not contradict the idea that the souls have already been created before 'in the thought of God'. (Jer. 1:5) The mystic Jeanne le Royer (1731-1798), known as the Sister of the Nativity, says, together with Catherine of Siena, that from all eternity the souls have been the object of God's thought and of the tenderness of his fatherly heart, souls who, at the designated time, will be drawn from nought. The dispute about the moment of creation of a soul appears secondary to the conclusion that soul and body come into existence individually, about which most people agree. If we accept the pre-conception of souls it fills us with great awe as to the divine purpose of the unborn human life and of human life in general. A given life, then, does not appear to be an incident but an insertion in the already existent or the knowing.

High above towers the mighty Anointing with which Adam was endowed at the time, as his Hebrew name indicates (Aleph dam). Moreover, there is the autonomously acting Holy Spirit who, according to the Christian viewpoint, indwells with a person after his adoption as a child of God, through baptism, by means of the formula: *"I baptise thee in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen."*

I now quote from Ch. 3 from "Eternal Punishment" from 1871, by Robert Govett (1813-1901), who was a brilliant British preacher. "In his writings Mr Govett was a hundred years ahead of his time, and the day will come when his works will be treasured and sifted like gold", was the view expressed by famous Charles H. Spurgeon.

The soul is that part of man in which [among other things] reside the animal passions and appetites [connected through the organ of the heart]. We speak of hunger, thirst, love, joy, pride, fear, and so on. The soul is superior to the body, the prime mover in the man. Luke 12:16-22 says: *"Soul, you have many goods lying around, hoarded for many years. So rest, eat, drink and be merry."* But God said to him: *"You fool, in this coming night your soul will be claimed from you."*

Man's spirit is closely conjoined with his soul; so much so that the Letter to the Hebrews speaks of the *"deviding between soul and spirit"* as one of the astonishing powers of the Word of God. (Heb. 4:12) At death, both depart to the realm of the dead, where they remain intertwined. This is demonstrated because Scripture indiscriminately preaches about death sometimes as the departure of the soul, sometimes as being the departure of the spirit. And in like manner, it speaks of the restoration to life as resulting from the return of either the spirit or the soul. *"Jesus cried (shouted) again with a loud voice and dismissed the spirit. 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.' And having said this, He gave up the ghost (spirit) [breathed His last]."* (Mt. 27:50) Says James 2:26: *"For as the body without the spirit is dead…"* Thus Jesus went away in the spirit and preached to the spirits in prison.

APPENDIX 1

The ontological concepts of Plato, Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas

Natural philosophy, as taught at the cathedral schools and universities during the Middle Ages, fits in with Aristotle's hylemorphism and was accepted and further defined by Thomas Aquinas. Professor L. J. Elders summarises the development of the concept as follows (from lecture notes):

> «« Hylemorphism states that a thing consists of two components, namely a constant substrate and a determining form. The substrate loses its first form determination in order to acquire another in its place. (…) The Aristotelian concept of materia prima means something quite different from the 'matter' of the natural sciences: materia prima is absolutely not observable and is not something that is quantitative: it is an ontological principle that precedes the further elaboration of the concrete thing and it has nothing to do directly with the atomic particles of physics. Matter and form are on an entirely different level than what we know as atoms and molecules; as substantial factors of being they precede extension (…) Materia prima is in itself completely devoid of any determination and serves as a 'potentiality for determination'. (Further:) Plato was the first philosopher to teach systematically the difference between thought and observation. Aristotle developed Plato's ideas further: thought requires a capacity of one's own; this cannot be something belonging to the organism but comes as it were from outside to the person [i.e. from outside man's organic reality]. (And further:) Thomas paid a great deal of attention to the question of how the soul, separated from the body by death, would know (…) The activity of the separated soul is none other than thought: on the grounds of the fact that the soul has and possesses itself as immaterial reality it is from the start knowledge in potential. The definition of knowledge is, after all, 'the possession of a form in an immaterial manner'. (…) Does the human soul start out as a blank slate [tabula rasa] or does it possess knowledge from the beginning? Whereas Plato taught the pre-existence of the soul and that it enters the body equipped with a treasure-house of knowledge, Aristotle states that man must obtain all his knowledge via the senses. Experience does indeed teach us that we acquire knowledge gradually. The great difficulty here is how to explain the passage from sensible representations to the immaterial concepts of understanding (which Aristotle fails to deal with completely) (…) Thomas's theory goes as follows: because the sensible representations are images of individual things and exist in the organs of the body, they do not possess the same manner of being as human intellect – and thus they do not have the capacity to work on the [receptive, potential] intellect. Hence the need for another factor to work on these representations and re-form them. This factor is the active intellect [the so-called intellectus agens] which assimilates the representations to itself. Via these transformed representations it then works on the receptive thinking intellect. The sensible representation provides the content of the concept, the intellectus agens the general form. »»

Put differently: The content of the concept is identical to the perceptual input and the general form is identical to the assimilation of that input in a form that is adapted to the conscious interpretative capacity of the observer. That assimilation is seen to by an intermediary - the intellectus agens - whose activity is normally hidden from our conscious observation.

The work of this intermediary has been further defined in the maturational concept of Clifford Anderson, where it is called the S-Carrier (S from senses), which is dealt with in his book "The Stages of Life – A groundbreaking discovery: the steps to psychological maturity". Maturation, according to Clifford Anderson, is the construction of the cognitive ability to create a fundamental understanding of the world, a work that would be impossible without the conceptional activity of the S-Carrier. Whereas for Plato every piece of knowledge begins as a 're-cognition', Aristotle and Thomas only accept the 'cognition'. I believe that the one does not exclude the other. Even for the personal subconscious there should pre-exist to a certain extent knowledge from which a re-cognition can proceed if experience permits. After all, God has the freedom to imprint something in a person if He so desires.

With regard to conscious awareness, Thomas Aquinas did wonderful work. The knowing and guiding subconscious, hidden away from our conscious intention of will, has no place in Thomas's work – and an independent collective subconscious even less. And without the Thomistic discipline, for which I have a high regard, study of the subconscious would very quickly devolve into the vague statements so typical of all kinds of esoteric movements. Although this article is definitely not Thomistic, I would be saddened if the reader were to interpret it as contrary to Thomism. I believe that the main lines of Thomas's premises are maintained and an effort must be made to achieve a fruitful symbiosis between his ideas and the discoveries relative to the subconscious. It gives me great pleasure to leave to others the systematisation of any such fusion.

Lamer's "Wörterbuch der Antike" (edited by Fuchs for the Dutch version) provides us with the following clarification:

> «« To Plato the concept of ideas meant the eternal, unchanging, original forms of all things in the world surrounding us that we perceive with the senses, the 'appearance world' of the creatures, the objects, but also the abstract concepts such as virtue and good. Plato states that the ideas really exist in an eternal, unchanging world. The world as we perceive it came into existence from that world of ideas by imitation. And since the world we perceive is made of imperfect material, it is an imperfect and less valuable world of appearances when compared to the perfect world. (…) His pupil, Aristotle, representing the intuitive-literary tradition, set himself up against Plato and further developed his theories, the theories of the man who represents the coolly analytical tradition. (…) Aristotle opposes Plato's doctrine of the ideas and states that the ideas have no independent existence, but can only co-exist with the individual. In this way he arrived at the determination of the world of appearances with the aid of the concepts of form and matter [materia prima] which, however, does not itself cause the appearances to come into existence; nature builds up the existing world from form and matter. Matter only has the possibility or capacity [dunamis], whereas form realises or fulfils [entelécheia] the capacity. Form bears the goal, the fulfilment, in itself. This means that teleology (the goal-orientedness of the appearances) is the major angle of attack in the Aristotelian view of the world. The eternal immaterial form is the divinity, the absolute spirit, which creates the world by movement in matter. »»

Although the notion of form and image as belonging to the domain of the soul is not new, I believe that the further development of the notion is new, faithful to our scientific tradition according to the words of Alfred North Whitehead: *"The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato"*.

APPENDIX 2

In Parthenogenesis, the Y Chromosome would be Missing

In the XY gender-determination system, females have two of the same kind of chromosomes (XX), called homogametic. Males have two distinct chromosomes (XY), called heterogametic, of which the Y is received from the sperm. Not being fertilised by a man, Christ's blood should lack the Y chromosome, but then He could not have been a male! From parthenogenesis (virginal conception) one expects 23 pairs of chromosomes in stead of 46, and the result can only be female, as demonstrated by experiments with rabbits. The evidence for Christ's virginal conception arose from the count of 23 chromosomes +1. The extra 1 is a miraculously added Y.

Interestingly, there is a unique case of partial parthenogenesis described in the New Scientist (1998 issue Oct. 1995), entitled: "The boy whose blood has No Father", which they thought was probably due to the spontaneous mytosis (cell division) of an unfertilised ovocyte (female egg). More probably it could have been caused by a failed penetration of the plasma membrane by a spermatozoon, with the ovocyte subsequently partially fertilised by another sperm in the usual way, resulting in two kinds of genetics. It is the penetration of the membrane (a kind of eggshell) that triggers mytosis, but this the article fails to consider.

A chromosome count of the blood of Christ can be more closely verified, for there are blood samples of Christ from for instance the Eucharistic Miracle in Lanciano, Italy, which dates from the 8th century. To investigate the chromosomes in Christ's blood it has to come to life again, for in dead blood such a thing is impossible. Various ecclesiastical investigations or 'recognitions' have been conducted on this sample since 1574. In 1970-1971, and taken up again partly in 1981, there was an investigation by Odoardo Linoli, professor in anatomy and pathological histology, and in chemistry and clinical microscopy. Perhaps some blood that was left over from the investigation, closed in 1981, could be used for a count, after first having been warmed up to body temperature, accompanied by prayer.

Regarding Christ's blood, an interesting study has been conducted on the blood tears of 'crying icons'. For decades, the curious phenomenon has been occurring that in many places around the world, statues of Mary, as well as prints of Jesus, spontaneously begin to cry blood tears. An image of the Madonna with the infant Jesus began crying blood tears on May 3, 2003, which happened in the bedroom of Father Pietro Maria Chiriatte in Alberobello, southern Italy. On May 27, 2004, another image in the proximity, representing the face of the Shroud of Turin, also began to cry blood tears. In both cases, this blood was sent to the genetic laboratory of the University of Bologna, which has a great reputation for DNA research. The results for both blood samples were identical: they were human blood of type AB, but strikingly, the genetic characteristics of the Y chromosome had never been observed before and did not match the data from 22,000 samples from 187 different populations, which were in the university's database. The report concluded that this blood is so rare that it is almost unique, as there is statistically one chance in two billion that this typology occurs. In the accessible information there is no mention of a chromosome count.

PART 1 – Ch. 2

Sexuality & Offspring

'Happy Family' by Rebeca Falcó

This article focuses on the consequences of misguided sexuality. The difference between reality and ideal rarely diverges as far as in the field of human sexuality and reproduction. It is with hesitation that I write about this, because in myself I recognize the same chasm. Because of loss of contact with his Creator, man does not know how to direct his feet. He has become an exile without a fixed station, not only as far as his soul's rest is concerned, but also and especially for his inclinations and passions. On his life's journey, everything is ephemeral and unsteady. Where is his homeland? Fortunately, a way has been paved by Jesus. We are pilgrims, looking toward the homeland that will one day come down – radiant as a bride – when the chasm will finally be closed.

8 – Everything serves a higher purpose

The Jewish understanding of the law or Torah (first five books of the Bible) is that every Biblical narrative, commandment, prohibition and instruction makes sense. There are many Biblical rules that are incomprehensible to the orthodox Jew, yet he tries to follow them, knowing that a lack of meaning does not imply that it is absent.[9)] Every word has its designated place in the Bible; that is the starting point. A particu-

9) A Bible text is not always clear. For example, Lev. 12 prescribes that a mother who gives birth to a boy is unclean for 7 days and then must remain apart for 33 days. For a girl, double terms apply. What is its significance? We don't know. Some rabbis proposed that these terms refer to the stages of the embryonic formation process. ("The book of Leviticus", Rendtorff, Kugler and Bartelm - Brill Academic Publ. # 2002, p. 435) Nonetheless, yours' truly attempts to offer an explanation. (In Part 1.3)

larity in the text indicates a deeper God-given plan. Jesus came to fulfill the Torah, even down to each individual letter.[10] Everything in the Word serves a higher purpose. It is up to the community of the saints (kahal chasidim) to discover, even if the original writer did not think of it. Would it be too difficult for God to use human hands to wield the pen? While it is humans who have shaped the Scriptures, it is God who watched over the putting down on paper. Thus teaches Jewish tradition.

It proves fruitful to approach God's Word in this way, because the systematics and harmony throughout all its parts is astounding. I for me have never been able to discover a contradiction in it, which observation fills me with gratitude. The miracle of Scripture cannot be sung enough. That miracle is the *"fiery royal decree."*.[11] The Jerusalem talmud says of it,[12] in accordance with Daniel 2:22, that *"in the beginning, two thousand years before the heaven and the earth, the Torah* ***was written with black fire on white fire****, and lying in the lap of God. When God resolved upon the creation of the world, He took counsel with the Torah [and the preceding oral tradition]."* Daniel reads: *"He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the black and light dwells with Him."* Since God dwells in fiery light, the otherworldly Word consisted of black on white light. According to this view, Scripture was created before creation and Scripture as we know it is the precipitate of it.

A similar mindset is seen in God's creation, our Universe, where everything has a purpose down to the smallest detail. Nothing is accidental. There is always a 'sufficient reason', for otherwise God does not move.[13] And therefore, none of all that exists is meaningless. *"Thus says God, who created the Universe (...) He did not create it that it should be empty (tohu)."* (Is. 45:18) With humans, idleness trumps all; with God, it never does. If creation were at the mercy of futility and chaos, God would be subservient.[14] Man has full power to create chaos. He does, he has that choice. But God as ultimate causer cannot allow such to exist. That would be a tarnishing of God's 'honor', from the Hebrew also translated with majesty or glory.[15] That is why it is written, *"Behold, I make all things new!"* (Rev. 21:5) Crooked situations can exist for a time

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10) Matthew 5:18 presents a saying of Jesus: "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one iota or one tittle (therefore each letter) will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled." Nelson's complete study system remarks at this verse: "This statement of Jesus provides us with one of the strongest affirmations in the Bible of the inerrancy of Scripture. It is absolutely trustworthy."

11) The term from Deuteronomy 33:2 is usually translated with law, but the commentaries are unanimous that this special term (dath instead of torah) rather indicates a 'royal decree'.

12) From "The Legends of the Jews" by Louis Ginzberg # 1909 (Vol. 1, beginning of Ch. 1), translated from the German manuscript by Henrietta Szold. This is a huge collection of Haggadas, being the traditions woven around the Biblical story.

13) There must always be a sufficient reason, because otherwise God will not move. That is also why prayer is helpful, for it can be the 'sufficient reason' for God's intervention in given circumstances, such as the prayer: "Jesus, save a soul that would otherwise be lost forever." A distinction must be made between cause and reason why, for the cause of an answer to prayer is always God. God is his own cause (autonomous), something incomprehensible, but that does not mean that I cannot understand the reason for his actions. (See Wiki: "Principle of Sufficient Reason")

14) For Rom. 8:20, the correct translation is: "The creature (instead of creation) is subject to a meaningless existence", in accordance with Ps. 39:05 : "my lifetime is as nothing before You." The Greek "tsisis" of verse 20 means both creature and creation.

15) See David's Psalm under 1 Chron. 16:23-36, especially verses 25-27: "Great is God and high to praise, formidable is He above all gods: for all the gods of the nations are idols, but God hath made Heaven! Glory and glory are before his face; of joy and power is his dwelling place filled."

so that man experiences the consequences of his actions, but in the end, yes in the end, it is God who prevails and restores what was corrupted.

Solely nothingness is without cause. The Hebrew for meaningless is sometimes translated with 'nothing'.[16] Everything has a cause. Even Darwin's theory of evolution assumes cause, albeit cause without Causer, thus relegating itself to the most obtuse philosophy, flatulence at its worst. And they dare call that science! That their lamps be extinguished and their works thrown into the deepest darkness. Yes, for everything is pregnant with meaning and follows its course. Thus we must understand Jesus' statement that as long as heaven and earth exist not one iota nor tittle of the law will pass away. Here again we see that intimate connection between Scripture and creation.

A sufficient reason…

If God acts, there must always be a 'sufficient reason'. As science focuses itself on events that are repeatable, within certain conditions, i.e. verifiable, an extraordinary or one-time event falls outside the scientific routine, except to establish that it is indeed a truly extraordinary, sometimes even unique event – the same event, such as a miraculous cancer healing, can happen a number of times, is therefore not unique but is 'out of the ordinary' and thus outside the experimental domain. An extraordinary event is Christ's resurrection from the dead; Lazarus also resurrected, for his body was already stinking. Based on many witnesses and the reliable Biblical record, we may call those resurrections facts. An interesting example of a unique event is the creation of the Universe, which is therefore a theological problem and not a scientific one. The story goes that when God surveyed the good and evil that would come forth from his creation, the scales only gave just enough reason for his creation to be brought about.

Why this explanation? What does this have to do with sexuality? Cutting through the basic unity of sexuality and offspring contradicts the meaning inherent in the act of procreation. As stated by Pope Pius XI in his encyclical Casti Connubii (on the chaste marriage), from 1930 (nº 17): *"The primary purpose of marriage [not its sole purpose] is the procreation and the education of children."* And furthermore (nº 54*): "Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in exercising it, deliberately frustrate its natural powers and purpose, are committing a sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious."* This differs from what has been written in nº 16 of Humanæ Vitæ (of human life) that appeared more than 37 years later. That section approves intercourse *"only during during infertile days"* as a means of birth control, based on *"well-grounded reasons for achieving* ***birth spacing****"*. I agree with the teaching of Pius XI, for the infertile days have nothing to do with a purpose to create infertility, but with a reproductive design. The 'whole process' is therefore rightly called the reproduction cycle and not the infertility cycle.

The two, the sexual act and procreation should never be totally separated, although it looks different in this broken world. John the Baptist was born of an extraordinary late sexual intercourse, and with Isaac, son of Abraham it was even more extreme, which

16) Gen. 2:1 says: "Now the earth was desolate and empty," where 'desolate and empty' is the translation of 'tohu wa bohu'. The Septuagint translates this dual term in Jer. 4:23 with only one word: 'nothing'. Bohu is the mirroring of tohu, but this translation indicates that in its mirroring no other term arises. After all, nothingness, no matter how, always remains the same abyssal nothingness.

leaves the principle intact of elderly people having intercourse. The human condition has declined further and further and therefore this condition is no standard for sexual morality. The hereditary basis is not a decisive argument of which any form of expression deserves respect, for there has been no evolution, quite the contrary. The question to what extent certain sexual behavior, such as with a spouse, whose uterus has been surgically removed or between two spouses whose infertility is established, could be imputed as sin is another matter. After all, God takes into account our brokenness. Saint Paul's advice in his first letter to the Corinthans points in that direction (ch. 7): *"It is better to marry than to burn with passion."* And if married *"one should not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. But I say this as a concession."*

Experience of a physician-specialist

Four decades after the May '68 Revolt and after the rejection of Humanae Vitae in July of that year by almost the entire episcopacy of Europe and North America, we must observe that there is not only an aging population, but above all a birth shortage – a hazing of the fields, that there is not only 'adultery' but simply the failure to create families, that there are not only unexpected pregnancies and rising abortion rates, but also an increasing number of couples struggling with sterility. The interference of the State in the intimate life of families, the promotion of promiscuity through free contraception, together with the undermining of parental authority, the naming of marriage what is not marriage and, on the other hand, the active anticipation of the increasingly rapid dissolution of marriages once contracted, undermines the pillars of a society that needs to build itself from generation to generation.

Dr. Luc Kiebooms, doctor of nuclear medicine
From "How a Pope Got it Right" by Daniel Maes (2017)

In all this, one must remember that God loves his creation and seeks communion with his own, especially with the creature called man. God's law is there for our good and in this sense it can be compared to traffic regulations. The Torah is a ketubah (marriage contract) and thus much more than a bunch of rules. When violated, we shortchange ourselves and those around us, miss our purpose, which is a definition of sin. From 'missing our purpose' comes chains of derailment and ultimately death. (Jac. 1:15). God not only made a marriage contract with man, but He did the same with the Universe. Because creation is less than God – for God and creation are not the same – God sees Himself invited to care for his creation as with a hen for its chicks (Mt. 23:37); this He is obligated to Himself. The starting point is that God creates from Himself and thus recognizes Himself in his work of creation. Creating, therefore, means a lasting involvement with its result, an being in love with it. I am reminded of the Greek myth in which Narcissus fell in love with his reflection in the water. That creation is one of God's works, which God is watching, as it were, is being shown by the fact that the Universe is not of itself omnipotent (completely autonomous), as the deists claim, who on principle rule out any Divine intervention that comes from the outside. Nor is the universe omniscient, as the pandeists claim, for whom the Universe is identical with God. This is shown by the fact that there are things that only the Father knows, not even the Son, who is intimately related to the Universe, and time-bound: *"Of that day and hour no one knows anything, not even the angels in heaven, not even the Son, but the Father alone."* (Mt. 24:36)

9 – A return to pagan roots

Birth control has always existed. What about all the newborn boys of Hebrew slaves, murdered by the Egyptians? This was meant to curb the growth of the Jewish people. And who has not heard of the Biblical Moloch, a furnace of fire into which they threw children? (2 Kings 23:10; Jer. 7:31, 32:35) Birth control also existed later in the Greco-Roman world. We know that decoctions of tartan, pomegranate and pennyroyal, a minty plant, were used to induce infertility and abortion. Ancient Rome was decadent and hedonistic, which led to a dwindling progeny.[17)] Abortive methods were primitive; consequently, newborns were not yet worthy of protection under Roman law. Only once the father had taken it into his arms during a special ceremony did it have the right to life. Children were seen as a burden and marriage, which was in fact a kind of cohabitation contract, the affectio maritalis, meant nothing. Adoption was common among the upper bourgeoisie in order to secure succession. The fear that foreigners would flood Rome with their large families was certainly not unfounded. As early as the year 18 BC, Emperor Augustus enacted laws, the Lex Julia, in an attempt to boost Roman childbearing.

The fact that an infant was not yet worthy of protection under Roman law unless accepted in a ceremony is now also being discussed as an acceptable principle in our 'civilized' society, following the example of Prof. Peter Singer. In China and India, babies are simply laid in the street to die while passersbys do not look up or back. What we are currently experiencing with birth control and abortion comes from a 'God is dead' culture and is an unmistakable return to pagan roots, with the understanding that abortion is now done clinically and out of sight. That's handy, because then we can uphold our cherished 'virtue' - hypocrisy at its finest. According to Alberto Giubilini, a professor at the University of Milan and Francesca Minerva, an ethicist at the University of Melbourne, parents should have the right to perform postpartum abortion (infanticide), even if the child is not disabled. After all, babies would 'not yet be human beings' and therefore not have an automatic right to life.[18)]

John Paul II, in his magisterial 1995 encyclical "Evangelium Vitæ", spoke of the greatness and inestimable value of life conceived in the womb, which through its 'supernatural vocation' and in the recognition or non-recognition of it, indicates the way a person spends his or her life on earth. Thus, he explained:

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17) According to Prof. M. H. Morgan of Harvard University, perhaps 325 liters or 86 gallons of water per capita per day were transported to Rome by the 9 aquaducts. The unhygienic conditions of the town led to a very high mortality rate, so that the deficit could only be compensated by immigration. (As concerns the water supply of ancient Rome, see: "Transactions of the American Philological Association" by Prof. M.H. Morgan - Vol. 33, pp. 30-37 # 1902.) To cite an example: A person with a diarrhetic condition was advised to go to the public baths to get 'healed'. This shows, once again, that the hygienic precepts of the Torah, which were given in the year 1460 BC, were an anachronism that could only have been provided by God. See Appendix.

18) Murder of newborn babies, according to these authorities, should be tolerated not only for medical but also for financial or social reasons. As soon as one believes that a newborn baby places too much of a social, economic or psychological burden on the family or society, this would be a valid argument. Both a fetus and a newborn are certainly human beings and potential persons, the argument goes, but neither is a 'person' in the sense of 'having the moral right to life'. Infanticide would therefore be acceptable if 'the welfare of the family' is at risk, even if the baby could later have an 'acceptable life', according to Giubilini and Minerva. ("After-birth abortion: why should the baby live?" by Alberto Giubilini and Francesca Minerva - Journal of Medical Ethics # 23 Febr. 2012 (doi:10.1136/medethics-2011-100411)

«« At the heart of every culture lies the attitude someone takes to the greatest mystery: the mystery of God. Where God is denied and people live as though He does not exist, or his commandments are not taken into account, the dignity of the human person and the inviolability of human life also end up being rejected or compromised. »» (nº 96)

John Calvin (of orthodox-Jewish descent) and birth control

Calvin's commentary on Genesis 38:8-10, where Onan squanders his seed because he does not want Tamar to have children, goes like this: «« Besides, he [Onan] not only defrauded his brother of the right due to him, but also preferred his semen to putrify the ground, rather than beget a son in his brother's name. The Jews quite immodestly gabble concerning this thing. It will suffice for me briefly to have touched upon this, as much as modesty in speaking permits. The wanton spilling of semen outside of intercourse between man and woman is a monstrous thing. Deliberately to withdraw from coitus in order that semen may fall to the ground is doubly monstrous. For this is to extinguish the hope of the race and to kill before he is born, the hoped for offspring. This impiety is especially condemned, now by the Spirit through Moses' mouth, that Onan, as it were, by a violent abortion, no less cruelly than filthily cast upon the ground the offspring of his brother, torn from the maternal womb. Besides, in this way he tried, as far as he was able, to wipe out a part of the human race. If any woman ejects a foetus from her womb by drugs, it is reckoned a crime incapable of expiation and deservedly. Onan incurred upon himself the same kind of punishment, infecting the earth with his semen, in order that Tamar might not conceive a future human being as an inhabitant of the earth. »» These comments by Calvin were translated for this book directly from the original Latin, the language in which Calvin used to write. The above quote is not shown in the later publications of the "Commentaries of Calvin", like those of the reputed Eerdmans Publishing (U.S.A.) from 1948.

The Bible and Birth Control
Charles Provan – Zimmer Printing # 1989 (pp. 67-68)

10 – Opening the floodgates

From a Christian point of view, procreation is essentially contained in the marital act, and the use of any contraceptive is against the intention of the Lord of the harvest, of Him who gives life. This was clearly expressed in the 1930 encyclical Casti Connubii, which was consistent with Calvinist views. Commenting on Genesis 38:8-10, John Calvin called the wanton spilling of seed in mutual union *"something monstrous"*. Luther expressed similar views. Taking away the possibility of offspring from the sexual act is a violation of the divine law of nature, the encyclical stated, and constitutes an impairment of marital chastity, although the act itself, it emphasized, also includes other goals related to the intimate and sanctified union of man and woman.

Casti Connubii appeared at a time, following World War I, when social attitudes in a number of European countries regarding women's emancipation and the dissolution of marriage were undergoing major shifts. For instance, a Private Member's Bill introduced in 1923 in the U.K. – which passed as the Matrimonial Causes Act – made adultery by either husband or wife the sole ground for divorce; a wife no longer had to prove additional faults against her husband. The Summary Jurisdiction (Separation and Maintenance) Act in 1925 extended the grounds on which either partner could obtain

a separation. The new mentality manifested itself at that time in an increase in (illegal) abortions and the increased use of the (still primitive) contraceptives, witness the condemnation, just then, in a letter from the bishop of Zagreb to all the doctors of his country with an appeal to oppose the *"white plague"*, pointing to the proliferation of contraception and abortion.[19] John Dudley said: *"It was understood from the earliest times that marriage needs to be protected by means of a law against adultery. If society abolishes the law against adultery, then it no longer values marriage."*

De sluizen gingen pas echt open in de jaren zestig. In '63 arriveerde in Nederland de anticonceptiepil nadat deze in 1960 in de Verenigde Staten medisch was goedgekeurd. Binnen de kortste keren zorgde 'de pil' voor een seksuele revolutie. De pilgebruikster was weinig bekommerd om het standpunt van haar kerk, priester of dominee, die op lokaal niveau zich heel spoedig en ongeacht geloofsrichting wisten te plooien. Geboorteregeling werd daarmee een bijna universeel fenomeen.[20] Eind '67 werd in Frankrijk, nadat elf wetsvoorstellen in tien jaar tijds waren afgewezen, de wet op contraceptie aanvaard (la Loi Veil). Eindelijk, ja eindelijk had de 'vox populi' de 'vox dei' overstemd! In Nederland is de "Wet Afbreking Zwangerschap" pas 17 jaar later officieel in werking getreden. In de 30 jaar nadien zijn in Nederland één miljoen abortussen uitgevoerd. Wereldwijd is in 2014 van de geschatte 210 miljoen zwangerschappen een kwart door een abortus afgebroken. Daarnaast was abortus in dat jaar verantwoordelijk voor ongeveer 70.000 moedersterftes door de lamentabele omstandigheden waaronder zulks plaatsvond (in vooral de derde-wereld-landen, maar niet uitsluitend). [21]

Six months after the French legislation, when the Pope published Humanæ Vitæ (On Human Life), the world proved too small. People were dismayed. Never before had an encyclical been so fiercely criticized and that only because its 'outdated' views were maintained. Yet, a look back shows that the maligned position was correct. The use of

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19) On Oct. 3, 1998, Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac (1898-1960), who sent this letter, was beatified as a martyr. His letter to all physicians is mentioned in the May 8, 2010 bimonthly magazine L'Homme Nouveau (N° 1469), in an article devoted to his life and work.

20) Hormones of contraceptives break down much harder than natural hormones, which, along with the (illegally) used hormones in animal husbandry, finally end up in the drinking water. This could be the cause of the increase everywhere of hermaphrodites, which used to be almost unheard of. I suppose that as a result of the universal application of 'the pill', it has now become a rare, i.e., more or less normal phenomenon. As a result, in 2013, Germany and Australia were given the legal option to leave the gender undecided when a newborn is declared to the civil registry.

In Israel, with the most intensive water recycling in the world, male fertility has declined significantly, supposedly because of the hard-to-degrade hormones found in the surface water (I have not been able to find research on this). At Israeli sperm banks, only 1 in 6 applicants passes the sperm quality requirement! And among conscript soldiers, 1 in 3 seems to be technically infertile (a sperm count of less than 20 million). It is therefore not surprising that Israel is the country with the most in vitro fertilizations in the world. A serious matter, because infertility is thus transmitted to the next generation, for children conceived in this way have also a reduced fertility.

21) "Unintended pregnancy: worldwide levels, trends, and outcomes" by S. Singh, G. Sedgh & R. Hussain – Studies in Family Planning # 2010 nr. 41-4 (pp. 241-50). By 2023, total abortions were 73 mln, according to the World Health Organization.

contraception dulled consciences. The attitude of tolerance, the 'anything goes' mentality, opened the way to unbridled sex, the legalization of abortion, and most recently, assisted suicide, euphemistically called euthanasia. *"Flat, flat Holland, full of porn and complexes. Puritan Holland is now a bawdy crib in which worms sex. From Groningen to Westerscheld thou became Europe's garbage dump; it stinks and swears. O land of manure, a bump of pestilence. O Efteling for sexists. Cowardly, cowardly Holland, whoremongers without heirs. Your country was once a cradle of children, but children are now discomfort. Die they must. Decadent at heart, for a while ye remain as white-washed graves. From South to North, its infanticide, and Rachel, nowhere do I hear complain."* (author unknown) It is a succession of disorders, the list is far from exhausted, in which the family in particular has suffered, with in its wake an uprooted youth. The evil propagates its own solution: the first step towards a more liveable society lies in taking measures to strengthen the traditional values of the family. This cannot be emphasized enough. See also: "The Faith in Europe" by John Dudley, delivered on April 4th 2013, at the traditional Roman Catholic Fisher More College, Fort Worth, Texas.

Freemasonry and the new morality

Alain Bauer, once a Grand Master of Freemasonry, decided to leave in 2005. In "L'Homme Nouveau" of Nov. 12, 2005, he explains that Freemasonry has always been well aware that the acceptance of contraception would eventually lead to abortion and, at a later stage, euthanasia. Former Grand Master and gynæcologist Dr. Pierre Simon, in a radio interview with France Culture on Oct. 8, 2007, said: "For 40 years, our struggle has always been the same: contraception, liberation from sexual morality, abortion, homosexuality and euthanasia. (...) We had the support of a great fraternal parliamentary presence [of Freemasonry within parliament], which wants to pluck Man out of centuries of darkness and let him descend from heaven to earth." In the run-up to legalized abortion, he was the official adviser to Health Minister Simone Veil-Jacob, a survivor of the Auschwitz-Birkenau and Bergen-Belsen death camps. Instead of being a witness to what happened there, she became a propagandist of the abortion hecatombe.

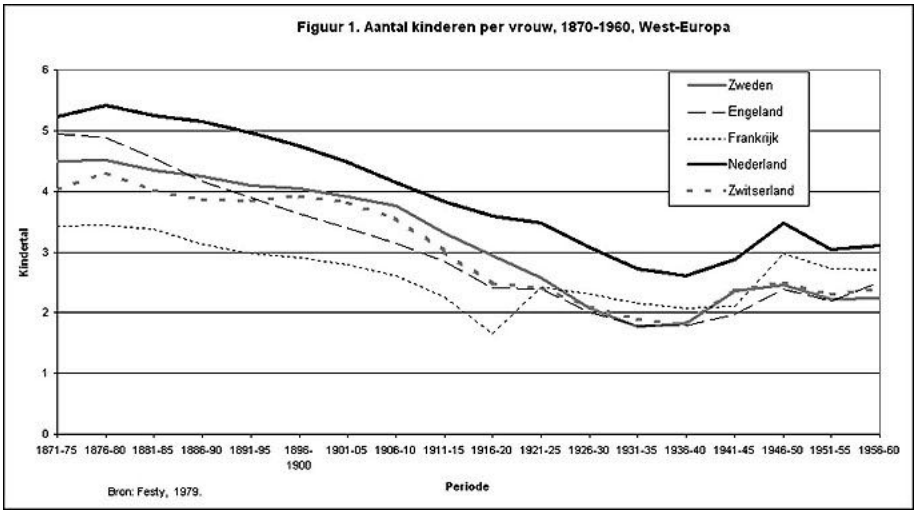
In 1968, the wildly popular book was published: "The Population Bomb" that was penned in three weeks by Paul Ehrlich. It had a huge impact on the mythical concept of 'overpopulation', mythical because the problem, which is a real one in some countries, was approached infantilely, yes almost criminally. The antidote to this amateurish book can be found in Matthew Connelly's 2008 book: "Fatal Misconception". The dreaded population explosion that would result from a return to old values did not happen, mainly because in Third World countries women were becoming more educated. Education, anywhere in the world, appears to be the only statistically relevant factor for a temporalization of population growth, which was already reflected in the 19th century, when birth control was virtually non-existent. In the year 1800, the typical white American woman, during her lifespan, gave birth seven times. That had been halved by the year 1900. A similar development has also occurred in Europe.

Demographic developments in the Dutch part of our continent have always been exceptional. When Prof. Joop Hartog delivered his farewell lecture on June 29, 2011, as professor at the economic faculty of the University of Amsterdam, he reviewed the demographic aspects, starting with the sixteenth century, in which immigration appeared to have played a key role. In his lecture, entitled "Is the Measure Now Really Full?", he said, among other things:

«« Jan de Vries and Ad van de Woude note in their wonderful book on three centuries of economic growth in the Netherlands that in the 500 years between 1500 and 2000, the population in France increased 4 times, in Belgium 6 times as much, and in the Netherlands 15 times. 15 times! (…) During this period, the Dutch population grew from 1 million to 16 million. The first spurt occurred during the Golden Age in conjunction with affluence and its attraction to immigrants. From 1650 to 1800, although the population was stable at 2 million, there was a continuous immigration surplus: during that century and a half, the Netherlands was clearly an immigration country.

After 1800 the growth marathon began, a marathon that fits into the European demographic transition of declining death rates and remaining high birth rates. (…) Between 1800 and 1900 the Dutch population grew faster than in most European countries, after 1900 even much faster. Every Dutchman knows why: the Catholics who were hounded by their pastors to emancipate by multiplying. (…)

The development after World War II is easy to summarize. From 1945 to 1970, the population grew annually by about 150,000 people, all home-grown. From 1970, substitution occurs. Annual growth drops to about 100,000 persons, 60,000 home-grown, 40,000 immigrants. From that year, 1970, the Netherlands has been an immigration country: only in the years 2003 to 2007 has the immigration balance been negative (more emigration than immigration). In 2009, the population grew by 89,000 'souls', 51,000 due to the birth surplus, much thanks to second-generation immigrants, and 34,000 due to the immigration balance. So the surplus due to immigration currently (2011) amounts to about 40%. This makes us a country with substantial immigration compared to the rest of the world. By comparison: In 2010, one million immigrants in the United States received permanent residence permits. Still a hefty 0.3% of their population. In the Netherlands, we received 146,000 immigrants in 2009; that is 0.9% percent of the population size. That is thus three times as many. »» (pp. 4, 5, 7-8)



Number of children per woman, 1870-1960, Western Europe

Returning to Paul Ehrlich's "The Population Bomb", it can be argued that some places do indeed experience overpopulation where the relative carrying capacity of the region is exceeded. Emigration to countries with additional potential then offers a suitable alternative. When parents are unable to supervise, shelter and feed their offspring, sexual abstinence is the preferred remedy[22)] – unless such a situation has arisen through exploitation and exclusion under ruthless capitalism or totalitarianism. We see that animals experience abstinence in the unfavorable season; why couldn't the same

apply to humans who want to live a life pleasing to God? – God's eyes are on the pious. I am not saying it's easy. But first, God will have to be given his rightful place. Utopian? Of course not, for God is the author of life and will not abandon Man to his fate.[23)] Humanæ Vitæ speaks of abstinence in the following terms:

> «« Proper and ethical birth control requires that spouses, first of all, become imbued with the true blessings of family life and that they acquire complete self-control over themselves and their emotions. If reason and free will are to curb natural urges, this undoubtedly requires a great deal of self-denial. Only then will the expression of love, so essential to the marital state, be able to rise to the required level (…) »» (nº 21)

11 – The demografic winter

The hedonistic quest for sensual pleasure is the same as under ancient Rome: a form of genocide. Autonomous population growth in the united Europe will turn into a decline by 2015, according to Eurostat. The European Parliament wants to answer that with ambitious immigration plans.[24)] No immigration stop! In the Netherlands and Belgium, the effects of immigration have been well felt since 1974,[25)] because there, as of 2010, half of newborns have an Arabic first name. Even with an aggressive immigration policy, the numbers in Europe will start to drop sharply after 2035.[26)] For Greece, Italy, Spain, and Germany, the situation is already dramatic with a fertility rate of 1.3 to 1.4 – which is the number of offspring of the average woman (the figure needs to be 2.1 to sustain the population), meaning that by the year 2050, the population of those countries will be halved (compared to 2000)! Thanks to immigration and the higher but declining fertility of the European Muslim woman, which stood at 3.5 in 2005, it is thought that by 2050 about 30% of Europeans will be Muslims[27)] …if God keeps aloof. God, however, will not remain silent in this turning point of time, first of all through "The Enlightenment of Conscience", also called "The Warning".

The declining fertility rate is not limited to Europe. Declining trends are evident all over the world, even in Muslim countries. According to David Goldman, the Muslim

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22) Abstinence is also required for reasons of a medical nature, group interest and because of so-called social indications, the latter if, for example, all-encompassing care is required for a disabled or sick family member, which would make care of new family members inadequate.

23) In the Reign of Peace, we may look forward to the fact that God will have given women a new menstrual cycle for people who are in all respects healthy, and this will cut off population explosions.

24) According to Simon Busuttil, a member of the European Parliament, by 2050, the European Union will need sixty million migrant workers in order to compensate for a fall of the working age population. The report (A6-0251/2009), issued by Busuttil, stressed the vital importance of this immigration in the face of Europe's ageing population, especially as, according to Eurostat, its working age population is expected to have fallen by fifty million towards 2060. That this aging could be countered with a policy to strengthen the family is not part of the bon ton in government circles.

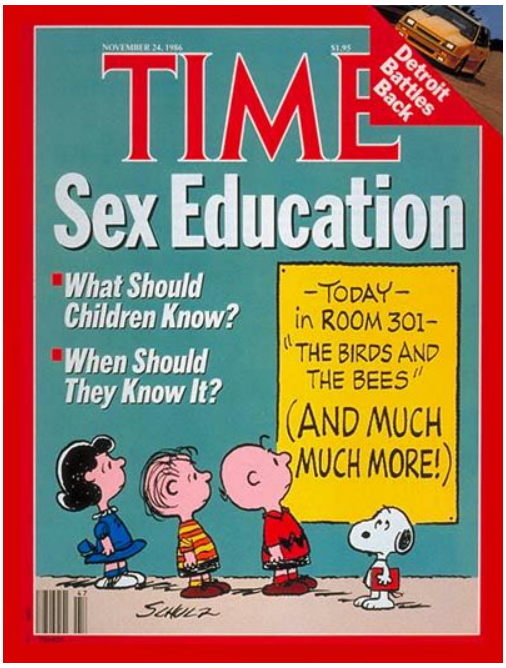
25) In December 1973 there were talks in Copenhagen between European Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers in what was known as the fireside summit. One of the topics was the troubling demographic situation in Europe. Then and in subsequent meetings, Europe's new immigration policy was decided, without parliamentary discussion and with a total disregard for the democratic process.

26) Eurostat Newsrelease 119/26-08 2008.

27) "Krekar claims Islam will win" - Aftenposten, March 13 2006. The Aftenposten is a leading newspaper in Norway. Mullah Krekar is a Kurdish Muslim from Iraq, living in Norway.

world is on the brink of the fastest population decline in recorded history.[28] Driving the demographics of Iran, Turkey, Algeria, Tunesia, and other Muslim countries are the people in their teens and twenties, born into large families. But now, it seems, they are having only one or two children. In 2010 there were nine Iranians of working age for every elderly dependent. By extrapolation there would be in the middle of the 21st century more Iranians in their mid-sixties than in any other age bracket: by then there will be seven elderly dependents for every ten working Iranians.

Increasingly favorable life expectancies, including Third World countries, masked declining fertility for a hundred years, but that condition is now over. Statistically, by 2040, the world's population will begin to decline sharply.[29] This has long been the case in Russia, and by the war in the Ukraine, which took the lives of at least 700,000 Russians, this created a dramatic demographic situation.[30] Currently, more than 100 countries are below the 2.1 substitution level. Singapore stands at a paltry 1.03; Niger, on the other hand, at 6.73 (2023).[31] As for China, this is a big lie, for if we look at the median population age and compare the development with India, it indicates that they do not have over 1.4 billion inhabitants but only 1 billion, and that they have been below the substitution level for a very long time.



William McNeill agreed that *"The most fundamental and pervasive disturber of human society in modern times is the global growth of population."* [32] Under the guise of family planning and women's reproductive rights, especially between 1960 and 1980, massive government-organized contraceptive, sterilization and abortion campaigns were conducted in large parts of East and South Asia, Africa and the Americas. The World Bank and the United Nations in particular played an extremely bad role in this. The name of Bill Gates (the founder of Microsoft) also keeps coming up. By the way, the sovereignty of the press as an independent fourth power is a hard-won illusion; if there is a conspiracy, it is through the press channels and the movies that the underlying principles of depopulation have been constantly applauded, covering them with the cloak of decency and thus gaining acceptance in important segments of the population.

The idea of humans as the architects of life and death appeals to many. So it is not only the policy makers who are to blame. An old dream came to fulfillment. Autonomous

28) "How Civilizations Die - And why Islam is dying too" by David Goldman - Regnery Publishing, Washington DC # 2011 (Ch. 1). See also the report by the "PEW Forum on Religion and Public Life" # Jan. 27, 2011: "The Future of the Global Muslim Population".

29) UN 2008 Population Prospects.

30) This explains why Russian President Putin offered in Jan. 2025 to give new opportunities in Russia to Americans who had been reduced to a state of poverty because of the Los Angeles' Firestorm.

31) The World Fact Book (via Google).

32) "Population and Politics since 1750" by William H. McNeall, University Press of Virginia # 1990 (p. 15).

man at the center of the Universe: *"I am a God in the depths of my mind, and sit enthroned in the innermost parts of my soul."* [33] Later generations will wonder in amazement how this götterdämmerung (twilight of the gods) was able to spread around so unresistingly. Sociologists will be able to make connections. But are they explanations? *"I am a God in the depths of my mind - has been lifted from its horizontal position and set straight - Golgotha. The former son of the gods crucified, as a shadow without a body"*, writes Gerrit Komrij.[34] So after all, the dethronement of God. Where God is deposed from the throne, man loses his resilience. Every human being needs a higher power. If it is not God, then it is the State or just the neighborhood gang. Is it strange that among school-age youth there are so many suicides and reckless games (lying on the railroad for 'fun' in front of an approaching train and jumping away just in time). Where is the meaning of life if life itself is denied?

HBO
Sex and the City
Fall in Love All Over Again
Relive your favorite moments with Carrie and the girls with photos, synopses, music and fashion guides

12 – Sex and the City

Sexuality has become so disconnected from procreation in our society that it has become a trivial consumer good. It seems not exceptional that American teenagers, even twelve-year-olds, auction off their virginity to buy something nice from it - that nice Gucci bag! [35] Needless to say, their parents know nothing about it. Yet it is not only an American phenomenon. Permissive society has spiraled toward this kind of excess in an inescapable way. American Irene Vilar, born in 1969, and mother of two, admitted in her 2009 book that she has been addicted to abortion: 15 abortions in 17 years. Incredible. It's called "Impossible Motherhood. Vilar's cycle of pregnancies and abortions began when sixteen. She had married a Latin American literature professor, Pedro Cuperman, who told her that having children killed sexual desire. The modern woman, like Irene Vilar, grew up when contraception and abortion were commonplace. Young people think it's part of life, 'no big deal'.[36] The latest fad seems to be 'selective abortion', where one of the twins is removed because 'it wasn't meant that way'.

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33) Opening lines of the most famous sonnet by poet Willem Kloos (1859-1938).

34) "In Liefde Bloeyende: de Nederlandse poëzie van de 12e tot en met de 20e eeuw" (In Love Blooming: Dutch poetry from the 12th to the 20th century) by Gerrit Komrij # 1998 (p. 324-27).

35) "You should develop your own personal belief system – that's exactly my point!", says Natalie Dylan. "For me, valuing virginity as sacred is simply not a concept I could embrace. But valuing virginity monetarily – now that's a concept I could definitely get behind." (22-Year-Old Sells Virginity Online, FOX NEWS, Jan. 15, 2010) The story of teenagers offering their virginity for sale may be dismissed by some as implausible. But if even an American president, I mean Bill Clinton (1993-2001), displays repugnant behavior, why shouldn't this story be true? Sex is a commodity, let's face it, except for a president. ...although. Clinton has had to pay for his misconduct with legal nightmares. See "Lewinsky scandal" and "Documentary Shows Teen Girls' Sexual Depravity".

Agnès Soral

Set in New York's Manhattan, the famous television series "Sex and the City" depicts four professional women in their thirties to forties; their lives revolve around sex and the pursuit of men. These best friends discuss everything, down to the smallest, gory details. Says Charlotte Semler, Co-founder of Myla - the luxury sex brand for women: *"There is nothing wrong with fun. Sex and the City taught women that."* The four have an undisguised aversion to what they see as the petty-bourgeois family. *"Why should one have to share life with one person on the pretext of being sexually involved?"* says the French actress Agnès Soral. They are truly perpetual adolescents. Of course it is romanticized. As if all women, in addition to a busy job, can indulge themselves like this! But it touches a nerve, because it holds up a mirror to us. A certain disgust overwhelmed me after having watched several episodes. One thing strikes the mind: they have no peace, these ladies. Satisfaction has evaporated. Each new adventure quickly grows into boredom. For the same effect, the 'kick and wow' have to grow bigger and bigger, and so do the television viewers, which explains why the series, which ran from 1998 to 2004, became more and more extreme. Not without wisdom, Soral says that having listened intently to many friends, she was *"dumbfounded to find that the couples who endure make do with the least sex in their relationship."* [37] Of course, some level of sex in marriage is healthy. Rabbi Shmuley Boteach comments on the other side of the spectrum: [38]

> «« Sex is dying in America. Husbands are often too preoccupied downloading porn to be able to notice the live naked woman next to them in bed. Wives get their erotic excitement from shopping in malls. (…) From the outside all looks like one big party. People are driving to work in nice cars, running back to nice homes to take care of their kids. Taking great vacations, going to the gym to work out, buying nice stuff at malls. But in reality, these people are going to jobs that don't really engage them and come home to marriages that no longer

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36) The number of teenage abortions in Belgium continues to rise. This is according to a study by youth physician Chantal Kortmann, reports the Christian weekly Tertio (March 23, 2010). Kortmann was a member of the parliamentary evaluation committee, set up after the passage of the abortion law in 1990, following a decision-making process that had taken nearly 20 years and in many ways represented a break with political tradition. Kortmann analyzed the figures of births and abortions among teenagers in the period between 2003 and 2007, during which the number of teenage pregnancies increased remarkably. "While the number of births to teenage mothers remained rather stable, the number of abortions increased at about the same time as the number of pregnancies. As of 2006, we see one abortion for almost every birth." That means that in that period, half of teenagers had their pregnancies terminated. In practice, a child in Belgium and the Netherlands may have an abortion from age twelve and without parental consent.

37) Interview with Agnès Soral (born in 1960) in La Libre Match of 17 March 2004. «« L'actrice se demande « pourquoi on devrait être obligé de vivre avec une personne sous prétexte q'on a des relations sexuelles avec elle. (...) Je suis une oreille attentive, je recueille les confidences de beaucoup d'amis et je suis atterrée de constater que les couples qui durent sont ceux qui ont le moins de sexe dans leur relation. »»

38) "The Kosher Sutra: 8 Sacred Secrets for reigniting desire and restoring passion for life" by Rabbi Shmuley Boteach, Harper Collins, New York # 2010 (pp. 2-6).

captivate them. And their kids, why, they're not home at all. They're always out with friends. That's how boring they find home-life to be. (…)

It appears that America has a contradictory relationship with sex. On the one hand, sex is everywhere. (…) The one place it isn't, is the place you'd most expect to find it: the American bedroom. One would think that a husband and wife, immersed in this all-pervasive culture of sex, and more sex, would take advantage of their near-constant availability to one another and knock it out of the park. Forget about it. Studies show that about one third of 'all' marriages in America are utterly sexless. (…) Of the twenty families I counseled on my television show "Shalom in the Home" about half had not had sex in more than a year. (…) I believe that these two facts – the instant availability of sex in the cultural marketplace versus its increasing nonexistence in the American bedroom – far from being contradictory, are intimately related. (…) Sex has lost its potency. It has been miniaturized, trivialized, and lost its grip on married couples. Worse, eroticism has been vulgarized and cheapened. No longer a pleasurable dream, it is now a pornographic nightmare of misogyny and degradation. »»

Orthodoxy proscribes the Jewish husband from intentionally observing his wife's nakedness at any time. This helps to see his wife not as a sex object during day time, and not to have unclean thoughts when he watches other women. Also, when his wife grows older and less attractive physically, he does not mind because he has learned to appreciate her inner qualities, and this in turn keeps sex life happy.

Psychoanalyst Tony Anatrella, who later became a priest, wrote in 1993 "Non à la Société dépressive".[39] He explains that the negativism in our culture, manifested in abortion, divorce, homosexuality, promiscuity, drug addiction and the many suicides among young people, is insufficiently explained by the usual causes and should be sought in an alienation from God. He calls it a *"strike against the ideal"*. In short, a disaster. The denial of the moral dimension of our existence, the rejection of any ideal outside ourselves, says Anatrella, leads to the abyss. Thus any higher sense of purpose dissipates. Depression remains. Depression, better yet existential boredom, is in fact a disease of the place of the ideal. The depressed have the impression that their life is slipping through their hands and are unable to focus on a future. The fleeting, the now-moment prevails, giving the upper hand to destructive forces that in turn acquire a kind of glorified status, taking the place of the ideal. In the Paris Match interview following his new book, he says: *"In other words, today we live as if we had no roots, …and a society without a point of reference is doomed to die."*

This concludes with a dismal view of our society, but not desperate. For God, as the first causer, is obliged by reason of his majesty to intervene. This is also the prophetic testimony. And therefore our prayer is: "Lord convert us so that we can convert!"

39) "Non à la Société dépressive" by Tony Anatrella, éd. Flammarion # 1993. See also his book from Cerf/Cujas: "Interminables Adolescences – Les 12/30 ans" # 1988.

APPENDIX 3

• *Suicide in Japan - the Thorn in the Christanthemum*

by Silvio Piersanti

Excerpts with a commentary by Sandro Magisterbusz

ROME, March 8, 2010 – Italy and China are pulling out all the stops with celebrations and exhibitions in honor of the Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), Li Madou to the Chinese, a brilliant proclaimer of the Christian faith in the Celestial Empire of China, some four centuries ago.

The Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552-1610)

Matteo Ricci's genius lay in understanding and welcoming everything that could be taken from Chinese culture as an aid for teaching the Christian faith. He saw in Confucianism – but not in Buddhism or Taoism, which he staunchly opposed – the tablets of that universal law to which the Christian proclamation could add its unprecedented novelty. And this proclamation, when Matteo Ricci was in China, was followed by important conversions at high levels of society and culture. The same thing did not happen for another great nation and civilization of the east: Japan.

The history of Christianity in Japan is a history of martyrs. No other civilization in the world has shown itself more impenetrable to Christianity than that of Japan. In the past, by killing its messengers. In more recent times, by accepting it courteously, but without ever responding to it with waves of conversions. For their own part, however, the proclaimers of Christianity in Japan have so far been unable to penetrate the depths of that civilization's mystery, in order to 'contextualize' their message.

One striking element of the mystery of Japanese culture is the prominence of suicide. On average, one Japanese takes his life every 15 minutes. In one year, there are more than 30,000. 'Kamikaze' and 'harakiri' are the words of the Japanese language most familiar to the rest of the world. Why this should be the case is discussed much more openly today than in the past, in Japan. And the following discussion is an account of that observation.

The author of this discussion, Silvio Piersanti, is an Italian journalist of great international experience, living in Tokyo and married to a Japanese writer. He talked about the subject with, among others, the Catholic Bishop of the capital and the Nuncio (the Vatican diplomatic representative). The two agreed in identifying the question of God as the ultimate root of the ease with which Japanese take their lives. The Japanese, they said, *"have eight million gods, thousands of temples, and two official religions,*

Buddhism and Shintoism", but there is an absence of faith in a personal God, omnipotent and merciful, loving and close to every man.

Once again, Pope Benedict XVI saw it right when he identified the question of God as the 'priority' of his pontificate, everywhere on earth. In the message with which he introduced Lent in 2010, the Pope offered some reflections on the great theme of justice, beginning from the Pauline affirmation: *"The justice of God has been manifested through faith in Jesus Christ."* (Rom. 3:21-22) The Pope recalled how the principle of the Roman jurist Ulpian, according to whom 'dare cuique suum' was the formula for guaranteeing justice in the world, which in the reality of life has shown itself to be erroneous. Dare cuique suum in common parlance means to render to every man his due. In reality, however, this classical definition does not specify what 'due' is to be rendered to each person. What a man needs most cannot be guaranteed to him by law. In order to live life to the full, something more intimate is necessary, something that can be granted only as 'a gift'. we could say that a man lives by that love which only God can communicate, since He created the human person in His image and likeness. Material goods are certainly useful and required – indeed Jesus Himself was concerned to heal the sick, feed the crowds that followed Him and surely He would condemn the indifference that even today forces hundreds of millions into death through lack of food, water and medicine – yet 'distributive' justice does not render to the human being the totality of his 'due'. Just as man needs bread, so does man have even more need of God. Saint Augustine notes: *"if justice is that virtue which gives every one his due (...) we may question where the justice of man remains, if he deserts the true God."* ("De civitate Dei" 19:21)

JAPAN by Yamabon - pixabay

The Japanese experience seems to be a glaring and dramatic proof of the truth of the Pope's thought: without God, human cannot be happy. Material goods are required, but they do not guarantee happiness, the full enjoyment of life. (…) The Apostolic Nuncio in Japan, Archbishop Alberto Bottari de Castello, head of the Tokyo nunciature for five years, tells us:

> «« The Japanese do not have a personal relationship with God. The concept of the individual, which is at the center of western culture, is not part of their

cultural DNA. They identify themselves with the group, the society, the company, the nation. When a Christian arrives at the decision to take his life, he knows that he is about to violate a sacred law: life was given to him by God, and only God can take it away. The Japanese tempted by suicide does not have this obstacle. He does not have the concept of sin. He has no one, he has nothing, beyond his own material and cultural world, to ask for help. But in his world, asking for help is dishonorable, and so he himself must resolve the drama of his unhappiness, which has become unbearable. Christians, even at the darkest moments, can always reach out to God. The Japanese cannot. They have eight million gods, thousands of marvelous temples, shrines, altars, miniature altars, two official religions, Buddhism and Shintoism, but they live without the one omnipotent and merciful God, without the concept of God as father of all humanity and present in each one of us, always. »»

(…) The Catholic bishop of Tokyo, Paul Kazuhiro Mori, agrees with the Nuncio Bottari de Castello in maintaining that the Japanese lack the concept of God and of sin. When the Japanese decides to take his life, he does not think he is breaking a divine law. He does not feel remorse for his action. He does not see anything blameworthy, anything ethically negative, in it. On the contrary, with suicide the Japanese saves his honor and that of his family, if he still has one.

«« When you journalists come to Japan - Bishop Mori tells us - you admire their extraordinary accomplishments in the social sphere. Schools, hospitals, an abundance of material goods, high salaries, a low crime rate, safe streets, public transportation admired all over the world, flourishing industries, very stable public order. If you believe that it is social well-being that brings happiness, then you can conclude that ours is a happy country, within human boundaries. But if you want to look beneath the surface of this material abundance, you will find before you one of the poorest countries in terms of respect for the individual and his spiritual nourishment. »»

(…) Reverend Samuel Koji Arai, a fit and robust eighty years old, is pastor of the Interdenominational Protestant Church of the Mabashi neighbourhood. He has about a thousand faithful, most of them middle aged to elderly. *"But there were only a dozen of them when I arrived 46 years ago,"* he tells us. He interrupted a Bach fugue he was playing on the organ to greet us. Beside the organ there are two pianos and a cello.

«« We play a lot of live music – he says, smiling – classical for the old, rock for the young. Even when I speak to my faithful, I have to use two languages, one for the young and one for the old. They live in different worlds. It is easier for the young to understand the message of the Gospel, because the Gospel is revolution, while the old have such deep roots in the Japanese tradition that for them the Gospel is often incomprehensible. Suicide? I don't have the slightest doubt about the reason: it is the lack of God in the lives of the Japanese. Their frenetic, consumerist, hedonistic life reminds me of the Israælites who danced around the golden calf, forgetting God. Once the intoxication of alcohol and the excitement of dancing are gone, one finds oneself alone, without a purpose, without a value that transcends physical well-being. Life is seen as a race to be first to the finish line. Behind the finish line, darkness. And one wonders whether it's worth it to continue struggling to earn more and more, to spend more and more, to pamper oneself more and more, only to end up alone in some residence for wealthy old people, or in some retirement home. And so the idea of jumping in front of a train starts coming to mind more and more, until one day one climbs down the subway steps for the last time. It would have been enough to say, "Jesus, help!", it would have been enough to raise one's eyes to heaven, without even needing to say those two words, and life would have had

> an entirely different flavor, an entirely different meaning. Four times every hour I feel guilty, four times every hour I feel a punch in my stomach. Those four brothers who every hour of the day and night go away without knowing God. I feel them like four failures of my mission as pastor. We the Church should do much more. »»

(…) In a recent television discussion in which three young women who had attempted suicide participated, one of them, 26-year-old Shinohara Eiji, recounted her drama, which began in high school, where she was teased for being fat. The constant humiliation, year after year, led her to the decision to take her life. When she returned home from the hospital where she had been treated for the severed veins in her wrists, she was welcomed by her father, who embraced her. It was the first time in her entire life that she had gotten a hug from her father. *"We didn't say a word, but at that moment, in his arms, I understood that life is beautiful and worthy of being lived."*

All three of the young women agreed that what they needed to overcome despair was 'ai o kometa osekkai'. Ai o kometa means 'being accompanied, motivated by love', while osekkai means being an object of interest and care, a Japanese way of saying that they needed someone to take loving interest in their problems. In more simple terms, a little bit of love would have kept them from that extreme action. And no material goods or equal redistribution of wealth can guarantee that love. God can…

APPENDIX 4

The Institute for Family Planning addresses the Disrupted Family

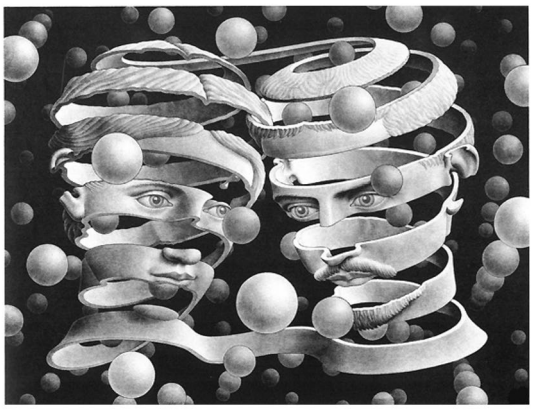
• Statistics on divorces in the European Union

© De blog by Jeanne Smits – July 22nd 2010

The latest report by the Institute for Family Planning (l'Institut de Politique familiale), made public today, shows tragic divorce rates for the 27 countries of the European Union in 2008: over 1 million families broke up that year, of which nearly 800,000 in the Europe of the '15', and just over 200,000 in the 12 countries that have recently joined.

Over the ten-year period 1998 - 2008, there were 10.5 million divorces in the 27 countries of the Union, of which 8.3 million (± 80%) were in the Europe of the '15'. These broken-up families affected **more than 14.5 million children**.

But this stability is only apparent: marriages in Europe have experienced an extreme decline. In 2008, IPFF shows us, there were 725,00 fewer marriages in the Europe of 27 compared to 30 years ago, or 23.4% fewer, assuming 3.1 million in the starting year compared to 2.37 million 28 years later. Those figures should be set against a still increasing population over the same period by another 4.6 million people.



Man & Woman – Maurits Escher

Over the period from 1980 to 2008, 725,000 fewer marriages were counted… but there was an increase of 334,000 divorces: in 1980, there were 672,000 broken-up families compared to more than a million in 2008.

In the Europe of 27, we now approach a ratio of 1 divorce to 2 marriages (1 million divorces versus 2.3 million marriages) while in 1980 the figure was 1 to 4.6.

In other words, the gap between marriages and divorces is steadily decreasing :

— in 1980 there were 3,094,093 marriages versus 672,917 divorces (21,7 %);
— in 2008 there were 2,368,951 marriages versus 1,007,706 divorces (42,5 %).

The number of divorces per year rose from 880,690 in 1998 to 1,007,706 in 2008, but remained stable in the 12 new countries of the European Union. We owe most of the increase to Spain, which accounts for 69% of this growth in the Europe of Fifteen.

Considering these figures, it is noteworthy that the statistics of totals are not very sensational: in 2008, 42.3% of all people were single, 44.3% married, 7% widowed, and "only" 6.4% divorced. But the latter percentage is increasing rapidly: in 1993, 3.4%

of the population was divorced, which means it has almost doubled in less than 15 years, while the close and faithful unions of previous decades continue to count. It is plausible, but not indicated, that those who remarried are lumped together with the non-divorced couples, embellishing the result.

Almost everywhere, the enthusiasm for marrying has declined sharply with the only exceptions being Sweden and Denmark. This is more particularly true of Eastern Bloc countries such as Bulgaria, Slovenia and Estonia, where the decline in marriages between 1983 and 2008 was around 50%. France measured a 22% decline and Portugal a 48% decline.

In 22 European Union countries of 27, the number of divorces has been increasing since 1980, with marked differences between countries: in France there was an increase of almost 60%; in Italy of almost 320%; in Portugal of more than 354% and in Spain of 1060% (a factor of more than 10) !

To be precise, we arrive at an additional increase of 73,964 divorces over the period in question in Spain and 10,495 in France. The differences in percentages can be explained by the fact (although the report does not mention this) that some countries start from a much lower level and have ‘benefited’ during this period from increasingly liberal laws regarding the option of divorce.

Are there any more telling figures? One counts in Belgium, Spain and Hungary two divorces for every three marriages currently (2010); in France, one divorce for every two marriages. In three quarters of the European Union, this ratio is above the average in Europe: Ireland is a favorable exception with 0.16 divorces in one marriage and as for Italy: 0.19 divorces in one marriage; Poland also stands out with 0.27 divorces in one marriage.

These figures, taken from Eurostat's IPFF and national statistics, show a violent trend, but leave a number of questions unanswered. Is it about newly contracted marriages and is it therefore mainly young children… who are affected? In this, what is the proportion of those who have already remarried? What is the recidivism rate, the re-divorce rate, within this group?

There is no doubt that this is a tragedy. There is one shining example: several studies, especially in the United States, indicate that couples who do not use contraception because of their religious beliefs have a very low divorce rate that comes to about 4%. 4% means 1 divorce in 25 marriages. That rings a bell! It is clear that the religious conviction prevails.

APPENDIX 5

Television broadcast in Belgium on the 'Abortion Issue'

• IF LIFE DOES NOT PROCEED…

A reportage from Ludo Penninck
In the opinion-shaping program PANORAMA –
Canvas, Jan. 12th 2012

Canvas is the second television network of the Flemish Radio and Television Broadcasting Organization, VRT, with a focus on high-quality programs. On their media library, the following was written about their January 12, 2012 broadcast :

What do you do when you desperately want a child but are told during pregnancy that it will have to go through life with a severe handicap? There have been many reports about people who made the difficult decision to go ahead and try to give their handicapped child a dignified life. People who chose to terminate their pregnancy are rarely portrayed. Panorama followed some of them in the agonizing choice between a life full of obstacles and death.

If the fetus has a severe incurable condition, termination of pregnancy is allowed in Belgium up to even the last week of pregnancy. It is the doctors who determine what constitutes a severe disability. What a dilemma: Down syndrome yes, dwarfism no? And then, each hospital keeps its own rules.

I am, she says as tears well up in her eyes, the worst mother imaginable. Because I killed my own child. You can't fall any lower as a mother. I hate myself for deciding that, but I would hate myself too if I had brought a severely disabled child into the world and watched him suffer. An was six months pregnant, and then she and her husband Hans learned that their baby, which they had longed for for years, would have Down syndrome. Simon - he wasn't there yet but already had a name - would be mentally and physically disabled and might never be able to live independently. *"Now should he be so badly needy that we can't do it on our own and we have to put him somewhere, I just wouldn't be able to do that",* he said. – *"Yeah, and what if we're not there anymore?"* (Hans and An, parents of Simon) Simon dies in his mom's belly from a needle puncture in his heart area.

And then there is Chieltje. Who came into the world with a serious and rare syndrome, which was not diagnosed during prenatal testing. He died when he was seven months old. His mother Nele has a difficult time when talking about it. *"He was having very big convulsions, his motor skills were constantly declining. He could no longer keep his mouth shut, he moaned a lot (...) We are glad we knew Chiel. For us that is our little son, we really like him a lot. But if you think in Chiel's place, it's not good. He got nothing out of it, and he suffered tremendously."* (Nele, mother of Chiel)

When do you prefer to see your fetus? When you spare it unbearable suffering or when you lovingly guide it through its disability? About a boundlessly ripping choice, about the blurred lines between life, suffering and death.

Beautiful film footage of a developing child in the womb, shown during the broadcast, is on YouTube by Dr. Paulien Moyaert: Pregnancy: A Month-By-Month Guide | 3D Animation # Nov. 24 2022.

During the program, a tour of a number of doctors and in several hospitals was presented. Within Belgian legislation, in fact, anything is possible, so to speak, up to the day before birth. The doctors spoke about this with obvious elan. One really has to be convinced to dare oppose it. Here it appears once again: modern man has elevated himself to the throne and reduced God to a vague remoteness.

It emerged that any child diagnosed with an incurable condition can be expelled from the mother's womb at any time. This is usually done after a lethal injection into the fetus' heart, but at the Free University of Brussels they choose to expel the child alive and then put it to 'sleep' with an overdose of painkillers. The child feels no pain. So what's wrong with that? The abnormalities covered were dwarfism, spina bifida, Down syndrome, cleft palate to even color blindness. Where one hospital draws a line between what is permissible and unacceptable, another may offer a 'solution'.

There is little to fear from government-appointed supervisory bodies. On the other hand, since a number of court rulings, there is a real danger that if the parents are not alerted by the attending physician to observed abnormalities in their expectant child, the hospital will have to pay a large compensation to the parents because they were not in a position to have their child killed. After birth this is no longer possible and therefore all additional costs for maintenance of the child will have to be borne by the hospital.

Comment:

In "Family & Life" by Pro Vita, an organization opposed to abortion, the conclusion was simple: *"The whole report was a deplorable scene that gave us insight into the decay of a society that has cut itself off from God, the source that keeps it vital.*" And also:

> «« The oppression and deformation of conscience has taken imposing forms. This was shown in this reportage by the testimony of parents who had denied life to their disabled child. One mother, who ultimately did not testify on camera, called herself the worst mother imaginable because she had killed her child. But she would make the same decision again. That was the general tenor. The parents felt cruelly affected by fate, which they said forced them to make an impossible choice: kill their child or give it a life of alleged suffering. They chose death as the lesser evil. Many parents who came into the picture were clearly regularly tormented by guilt. This they dragged around like a burden that just could not be

shaken off. There was no question of repentance, forgiveness or penance, only self-justification: we had to, we had to, we had to… »»

The same Family & Life article also contained the following staggering facts, which were not discussed in the television broadcast:

«« In Belgium, with a population of over ten million, €15 million is spent annually on the actual detection and termination of birth defects. Detecting a fetus with Down syndrome costs the community €50,000 per detected case. However, the usual chorionic villus test is not without danger. In fact, it can cause a miscarriage. According to Professor J.-P. Schaaps of the University of Liege, 25 to 50 (!) perfectly healthy babies will lose their lives through miscarriage in order to detect one child with Down syndrome! »»

APPENDIX 6

THE HOMOSEXUAL AGENDA THAT IS PERVERTING OUR SOCIETY

UK celebrates the Jubilee of the Law that Legalized 'Sodomy'
Conservatives call it 'a Monster'

August 7, 2017 (LifeSiteNews), by PETER LABARBERA

The British press has been leading the LGBTI celebration of the 50-year anniversary of Great Britain's repeal of its anti-sodomy law, with all the predictable hurrahs that have come to characterize the media's sycophantic coverage of the counternatural sex-and-gender-choice movement.

On July 27, 1967, the English Queen formalized the House of Commons' passage of the Sexual Offenses Act, which negated Britain's antiquated anti-buggery law dating back to 1533. The Act of 1967 decriminalized consensual sodomitic acts between men. [Buggery is the British term for anal copulation, once universally regarded as a "crime against nature" and formulated as such in the British and American law.]

Paul Johson is a Brit who does not subscribe to this hype. He is an eminent conservative historian and he has a much different take on his nation's drastic sodomy repeal. Johnson describes below the destructive incrementalism by which the LGBTI movement (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, incest) grew in power and continues to advance across the world to this day.

An Incremental Revolution

In his 1996 book: "The Quest for God: A Personal Pilgrimage", Johnson gives a tutorial of sorts for moral-minded peoples and less 'enlightened' (mostly non-Western) nations on how the LGBT movement cunningly achieved its rapid gains. Each agenda goal would begin with small, seemingly harmless steps with propagandistic noble intentions and in the name of 'progress' and 'compassion'. The end-game, as we now know, was a secular-values 'revolution' bitterly hostile and threatening to both Christianity and genuine liberty. What in 1967 seemed like a common-sense reform of an antiquated law was actually the first step that would lead to the meteoric rise of the intolerant, obnoxious homosexual power, and not only in Britain:

> «« Thus we began by attempting to right what was felt an ancient injustice and we ended up with a monster in our midst, powerful and clamouring, flexing its muscles, threatening, vengeful and vindictive towards anyone who challenges its outrageous claims, and bent on making fundamental – and to most of us horrifying – changes to civilised patterns of sexual behavior. »»

Johnson correctly denotes homosexuality as a *"great moral evil"*, something with which even many of today's Bible-professing Christians, neutered by the prevalent political correctness and decades of 'gay' propaganda, would have a hard time agreeing – to their shame, while intentionally ignoring the relevant section of Romans 1:24-32.

Johnson wrote all of this before the rise of homosexual 'marriage' and ubiquitous 'transgender activism', the promotion of which is the latest media fad. Sodomy-based 'marriage' was legalized in the U.K. in 2014 and, on the other side of the Atlantic, effectively imposed on all 50 states by the U.S. Supreme Court in its 2015 "Obergefell

versus Hodges" decision. Maryland and a few other states had already voted to legalize gay marriage and others such as California had it forced upon them by judges prior to Obergefell.

Johnson brilliantly describes how the LGBT movement's advance – like an insatiable, devouring monster – corrupts people and cultures, and displaces notions of virtue with man-centered definitions, and demands that what was once a moral wrong becomes a 'civil right'. See Isaiah 5:20 : *"Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"*

History of the Laws Against Sodomy

Under the designation of sodomy, homosexual acts had been an offense punishable by death in Europe since the 13th century. This penalty was abolished under the influence of the French Revolution and enshrined in the new French penal code of 1810. This policy was adopted in the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Bavaria, Italy, Spain and Portugal. Apart from the Protestant Netherlands, it was purely Catholic countries where homosexual intercourse between adults was henceforth tolerated. In other Protestant countries, notably Prussia and England, punishability was maintained, although the death penalty was replaced by imprisonment. Efforts were made to completely abolish punishability in these countries as well. In Germany, § 175 StGB was revised in 1969: fornication with animals was abolished, but sexual acts between adults and boys under 21 (reduced to 18 in '73) remained punishable until 1994. In England, homosexual intercourse was made legal from age 21 in 1967, reduced to 18 in 1994 and 16 in 2000, the same age as for heterosexual intercourse. In the United States, punishability for homosexual practice was regulated by state; the first to abolish it was Illinois in 1962. Thirty five other states followed until 2002 after which, in 2003, for the remaining 14, punishability was declared illegal by the Supreme Court in the case "Lawrence v. Texas".

Johnson's discussion of the "Monster in our Midst"

The following is an excerpt from the beginning of Johnson's book. It begins after a section in which he discusses radical, worldwide movements – race, sexual, environment and health politics – that collectively present an alternative to God and traditional religion: (emphasis added)

> «« The radical agenda (…) with its strong appeal to the idealistic, as well as the materialistic, instincts of mankind, especially among young people, does constitute an alternative religion. Like any other form of humanism, **it replaces God by man. It sees the welfare – or supposed welfare – of man, rather than the worship of God and obedience to his commandments, as the object of human existence and the purpose of society. That, of course, is its defect.** The famous Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner once argued that it is the consciousness of God, the acceptance that there is a power outside and above ourselves, to whom we owe allegiance and whose guidance we must follow, which essentially distinguishes mankind from other creatures. If belief in God were ever to fade completely from the human mind, we would not, Promethean-like, become masters of our fate; on the contrary, we would descend to the status of very clever animals, and our ultimate destiny would be too horrible to contemplate.
>
> (…) I believe this argument to be profoundly true, and corroborated by history, and what worries me about the new radical agenda is the danger that it

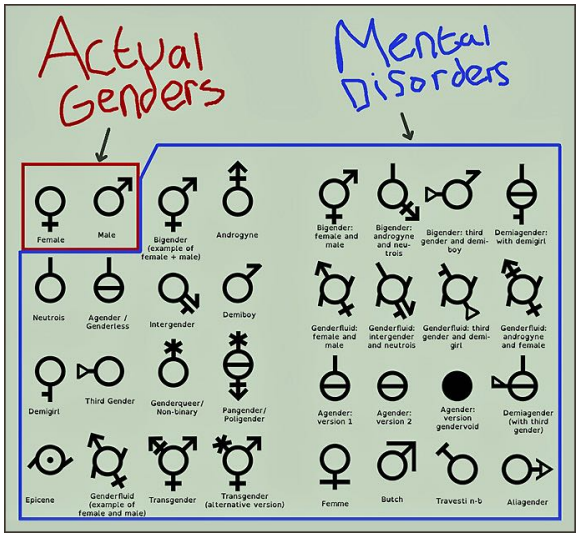
will dehumanise man just as the totalitarian alternatives did, though no doubt in rather different ways. But there are further, related objections. All the items on the agenda lend themselves to extremism. Take, for instance, the issue of homosexuality, an important part of the sexual politics item. **There were many of us, in the 1960s, who felt that there were grave practical and moral objections to the criminalisation of homosexuality**, and who therefore supported, as happened in most Western countries, changes in the law which meant that certain forms of homosexual behavior ceased to be unlawful. **Homosexuality itself was still to be publicly regarded by society, let alone by the churches, as a great moral evil, but men who engaged in it, within strictly defined limits, would no longer be sent to prison. We believed this change to be the maximum homosexuals deserved or could reasonably expect**.

We were proved totally mistaken. Decriminalisation made it possible for homosexuals to organise openly into a powerful lobby, and it thus became a mere platform from which further demands were launched. Next followed demands for equality, in which homosexuality was officially placed on the same moral level as standard forms of sexuality, and dismissal of identified homosexuals from sensitive positions, for instance in schools, children's homes, etc., became progressively more difficult. This was followed in turn by demands not merely for equality but privilege: the appointment, for instance, of homosexual quotas in local government, the excision from school textbooks and curricula, and university courses, passages or books or authors they found objectionable, special rights to proselytise, and not least the privilege of special programmes to put forward their views – including the elimination of the remaining legal constraints – on radio and television.

Thus we began by attempting to right what was felt an ancient injustice and we ended up with a monster in our midst, powerful and clamouring, flexing its muscles, threatening, vengeful and vindictive towards anyone who challenges its outrageous claims, and bent on making fundamental – and to most of us horrifying – changes to civilised patterns of sexual behavior. »» (pp. 28-29)

Conclusion

Here indeed we have sexual politics in action. And, as with other alternatives to God, the result is not human happiness, but human misery. The homosexual community, as they now styled themselves, by their reckless promiscuity during the 1970s and 1980s, helped to spread among their members the fearful scourge of AIDS, a killer disease of a peculiarly horrible nature, for which there is no cure (only methods of suppression), and no immediate likelihood of a cure…



APPENDIX 7

THE DEMOGRAPHIC COLLAPSE TO USHER IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER

Ettore Gotti Tedeschi

LifeSiteNews – July 7 2018, by: Diane Montagna

Former CEO of the Vatican Bank: *"The authors of New World Order demographic collapse are now influencing the Vatican."*

ROME, July 7, 2018 — The demographic collapse of the West in recent decades was planned in order to create the conditions to initiate the demographic collapse of the West, serving as a springboard for the New World Orde. The instigators of this meltdown now have access to the highest levels within the Vatican, the former head of the Vatican Bank announced. He was its CEO from 2009 until 2012.

Speaking at the first international conference of the John Paul II academy for human life and the family, Italian economist and banker Ettore Gotti Tedeschi said initiatives to decrease the world's population by globalist elites have set in motion a series of predictable and intended economic, geo-political, and social catastrophes meant to 'persuade' people around the world to accept a global 'political vision' that would eliminate national sovereignty and institute the 'gnostic inspired environmentalism' as its 'universal religion'.

The recurrent themes of the present papacy are poverty, immigration and the environment, and we are led to believe that these are caused by 'the greed of bankers', war and man, the 'cancer of nature', he said. But this is 'fake news', according to Gotti Tedeschi. For him, the cause behind all of these scourges is the 'collapse in births'.

The people pushing this fake news, he said, are ‘gnostic prophets’ such as population control proponents Paul Ralph Ehrlich, Jeffrey Sachs en Ban Ki-moon, who, rejecting the natural law and the divine order of creation, seek to proselytize the world with their ‘anti-Catholic gnosis’. (The gnosis departs from the notion that ‘God and the creation are one: without creation no God.) Ban Ki-moon was the Secretary General of the United Nations from 2007 until 2016. Paul Ralph Ehrlich predicted in his 1968 book “The Population Bomb” that, because of its overpopulation, the world would very soon be famine-stricken. One of his solutions was to dictate enforced birth control. Jeffrey Sachs is the director of the famous Earth Institute that subcribes to the modern agenda of climate change, environmental damage and overpopulation.

According to Gotti Tedeschi, the ‘greatest enemy’ of the New World Order is the family because it provides ‘education, autonomy and independence’ from the state. Its second enemy is the Catholic Church, he said, and yet these gnostic prophets are ‘rewriting the Book Genesis in the halls of the Vatican’.

“The demographic collapse was planned without any doubt”, Gotti Tedeschi said. *“It is unthinkable that the decision makers in the United States and around the world did not know what they would have created by refusing life and the natural law.”*

The Italian financier said the economic collapse has been caused by a *“collapse in births, not because couples are having no children, but because they are not having enough to provide economic growth. Zero growth is two children for a couple. Zero growth is substitution, with the consequence that GDP stops growing.”* Governments have ‘solved’ this problem by ‘stimulating consumerism’ and outsourcing production, primarily to Asia.

But as the demographic collapse results in an ever larger aging population, so governments must increase taxes to absorb the costs of those living in retirement, he explained, resulting in a crippling effect on GDP and nations’ economies. *“It can appear to grow, but it is a big bluff, invented in the last thirty years”,* he said. [Added comment: When this bluff has reached its limits, they have to resort to enforced euthanasia in order to keep the economic wellbeing of the working class within bounds.]

Henry Kissinger

Tedeschi believes that none of this has happened by chance, and that the decrease in population is required in order to produce a crisis in the global economy and so make it easier to usher in a New World Order. [That is still in the offing.] *“The economic wellbeing is a formidable means of persuasion,”* he said. *“It is the best excuse to make people around the world accept a conclusion.”*

He referred to the Kissinger Report from 1974, which he said was partly an attempt to ‘homogenize culture’ by relativizing religion and ‘if possible, creating religious syncretism’. (Syncretism is a form of oecumene by joining what cannot be joined.) This goal is promoted by immigration, leading to a potentially dangerous mix of religious dogmas that could ‘cause war’.

The population control movement in the United States dates back to the pro-nazi, pro-eugenics founder of Planned Parenthood, Margaret Sanger (1879-1966). In 1969, the American president, Richard Nixon, criticized population growth in the third world, a problem that was addressed in 1972 by the “Commission on Population Growth and the American Future”, directed by John D. Rockefeller III. At the time, American geo-stratestists thought that population growth in the third world was a threat to American international interests.

This led to the “National Security Study Memorandum 200” (NSSM 200), published by Henry Kissinger two years later, in 1974. The 200-page report specifically states that population growth in the third world is a threat to American international interests because the growing populations need too many resources and the Western industrial complex, for example, needs the resources from Africa. The report also called for increased funding to Planned Parenthood. *“Everything was planned”,* Tedeschi observes, lamenting the fact that documents such as the Kissinger Report have largely not been read.

He said the threat of environmental catastrophe, which he calls ‘fake news’, is now used to push for a reduction in the population gap between East and West. Not only that, but the growing gap between *“too many rich and old people, and too many young people who are unemployed, is used to create the spirit for accepting euthanasia.”* Such a mentality is ‘criminal’, he said, as he recalled Italy’s Prime Minister (he didn’t say which) telling him one could cut government expenditure in one second through euthanasia, which would *“cut 25% of the population over 60 years old”.*

Gotti Tedeschi also drew attention to the current tension between globalism and nationalism: those who wish for a Europe that helps single countries grow as opposed to globalists who would prefer a Europe that governs all countries and eliminates national sovereignty.

“So what can the Church do? The Church will either collide or be isolated”, he said. *“But something has happened that should worry a lot of people”,* he added, referring to recent actions taken, in particular, by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences.

Those currently advising the ‘top of the Church’, he observed, are population control advocates (advocating abortive methods) such as Paul Ehrlich, Jeffrey Sachs, and the former UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon — people he calls ‘gnostic prophets’. *“To transform the divine genesis into a gnostic genesis and to do this at the Pontifical Academy inside the Vatican would be their masterpiece!” “We are near to this happening”*, he added. *“This should worry everyone.”*

APPENDIX 8

The Health Risks of Hormonal Contraception

Source: “Dos macroestudios confirman los riesgos de los anticonceptivos hormonales” by Miguel Ángel Martínez-González in ACEPRENSA, 29-12-2017.

Abstract: A study published in “The New England Journal of Medicine” confirms the higher risk of breast and other types of cancer for women who use hormonal contraceptives. Another study placed in the “American Journal of Psychiatry” links the use of these substances to the increase in suicides and attempted suicides.

At the time, the invention of the birth control pill was greatly applauded by the medical community. Today, that enthusiasm has waned quite a bit. For example, it was thought that women with symptoms such as severe hot flashes, regular irritability and extreme fatigue during menopause could be helped by prescribing the ‘pill’, in which the active ingredients consist of foreign synthetic hormones. The administered hormones would somewhat supplement the reduced amount of natural hormones during menopause and thus help reduce symptoms. (Even the so-called ‘natural’ hormones from other than human sources are often foreign to us or ‘contaminated’ with hormones foreign to us from, for example, a mare who possesses hormones identical to us as well as others)

The surprise was great when they had to discontinue a large-scale pharmaceutical study in 2002. After eleven years of research into the effects of administering the female hormones found in the ‘pill’ to alleviate symptoms during menopause, they found a 26% increase in breast cancer, 29% increase in cardiac inflammation and 41% increase in cerebrovascular disease, compared to the reference group who received a placebo without knowing it. (33, 34) [A placebo looks similar in appearance to the drug but is without the active ingredient.] Routine administration of this type of hormone is therefore not recommended. (35, 36)

Synthetic hormones are also in the regular birth control pill, but in much higher doses, about 6x more potent, with the aim of counteracting the body’s own hormone production. Only a very high-dose pill is able to stop ovulation and other body processes. It is obvious that the increase in breast cancers, heart infarcts and cerebrovascular disease will in that case be much higher than in the above mentioned study.

Hormonal birth control in the dock

Since exogenous hormones, used to alleviate menopausal discomfort, have fallen by the wayside, research assessing the risks of hormonal contraception has received increasing attention. This is positive given the fact that more than 100 million women worldwide use hormonal contraception. As a result, in the future, more disorders will be associated with the use of hormonal contraception. It has long been known that the use of combined contraception (with estrogens and progestogens as active ingredients) greatly increases the risk of developing breast cancer. (37)

In a large study in Denmark (38), the health status of 1.8 million women was closely monitored. In the group of women who used contraception, an average of 20% more breast cancer was diagnosed. In the group of women who had used the contraceptive pill for ten years or more, an average of 38% more breast cancer was diagnosed. All existing hormonal contraceptives increased the risk of breast cancer, not only the oldest products, but also the most recently developed hormonal contraceptives.

Some scientists want to qualify these findings because the individual risk of breast cancer is supposedly negligible. But the individual risk of developing lung cancer through passive exposure to tobacco smoke is also very small, but because so many people are exposed to it, it has been judged that the effect on the population was too large, and thus measures were taken. Why is there a tendency to use different criteria when it comes to the harmful side effects of hormonal contraception? Is it out of 'political correctness' or to avoid offending the pharmaceutical industry? Or do scientists have to slavishly submit to the ideological dictatorship of the sexual revolution? (39)

Another thing that these scientists fail to mention is that the use of hormonal contraception can be associated with many other side effects such as migraines, cervical cancer, liver disorders, cardiovascular diseases, etc. (40) The number one cause of death worldwide is not cancer, but cardiovascular diseases (heart attacks and cerebrovascular diseases). The risk of these diseases is increased by 60% by the use of hormonal contraception! (41) Despite the fact that these findings were published in "The New England Journal of Medicine", it seems as if no one remembers that. The attitude of these scientists is clearly contrary to what good public health requires.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) concludes that, although there is no increased risk of cancer of the uterus and the colon when using hormonal contraceptives, and notwithstanding the fact that contraception can help prevent cancer of the ovary, there is sufficient evidence of the carcinogenic effect of combined contraceptives (estrogens and progestogens) and that it is definitively established that they increase the risk of breast cancer (522,000 deaths per year worldwide), cervical cancer (266,000 deaths per year worldwide) and liver cancer. For this reason, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has classified these substances as carcinogenic substances, class 1, that is to say, in the most dangerous group of carcinogens. (37)

Suicide

The results of another scientific study, in which almost half a million women were psychologically monitored for more than eight years, were published in the scientific journal "American Journal of Psychiatry". (42) This study established a link between the use of hormonal contraception and an increase in the number of suicides and suicide attempts. These results are in line with a study whose results were published in the scientific journal "JAMA Psychiatry" in 2016. (43) There, a link was established between the use of hormonal contraception and an increased risk of depression, especially in young girls. This increased risk may be caused by the promiscuous sexual behavior of some women or girls, but not only: on a biochemical level, the steroid hormones contained in hormonal contraception can have a detrimental effect on certain areas of the cerebral cortex, possibly resulting in depression.

Conclusion

All these discoveries belong to the top of current epidemiological science. They invite us to reread what Pope Paul VI wrote in Humanæ Vitæ. Rereading this encyclical, one discovers how relevant this Pope's vision was, and also how wrong the modern mentality is regarding contraceptives. Countless ruined lives could have been prevented had one listened to the wise advice of Humanæ Vitæ.

Notes

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APPENDIX 9

DEATH AND DISEASE IN ANCIENT ROME

(2008 or earlier)

A talk given at the Innominate Society of Louisville (founded in 1926), a society dedicated to the presentation and discussion of topics in the field of medical history and touching on the cultural aspects of medicine.

Linda Maria Gigante Ph.D (1950-)
Professor of Art History and Humanities at UofL
Presently Professor Emirita University of Louisville

When thinking of ancient Rome, we imagine an imperial capital with impressive marble structures and luxurious dwellings. Indeed, at the height of the Empire (around 150 AD) Rome was, together with Alexandria, the largest city in the world, with a population estimated at one million, a number only to be surpassed by Greater London at the start of the 19th century, with sanitary conditions marginally better than ancient Rome. The metropolis was filled with awe-inspiring buildings, which proclaimed the power and glory of the Empire: its Coloseum, the Forum Romanum, the public bathes, and the monumental markets built by Emperor Trajan. Rome's wealthiest lived in richly adorned homes, located in the finest neighborhoods and commanding impressive views on the Tiber River. What we tend to overlook is the fact that this privileged life-style was enjoyed by a mere 5% of its residents, with the remaining 95% living at or below the poverty level.

Roman society was rigidly stratified, with slaves and freed slaves at the bottom of the hierarchy. It is impossible to determine the number of slaves and urban poor living in Rome at any given time, but it must have been enormous. For these residents, life was anything but luxurious. Their neighborhoods were cramped, squalid and dangerous. Instead of single-family dwellings (domus), the urban poor lived in 3 to 5 story apartment complexes (insulae), which were, at best, equipped with communal latrines and water-fountains. It is estimated that in the early Empire apartments in Rome outnumbered single-family dwellings by a ratio of 26:1. Because of overcrowding, poor sanitation, and generally poor nutrition, diseases were rampant among Rome's urban masses, whose life span was consequently very short.

My goal this evening is to reconstruct a picture of the quality of life of working-class Romans at the height of the Empire (between 100 and 200 AD). I will discuss diet, general health and life expectancy, as well as the various diseases to which the general population succumbed. I will briefly discuss the burial rituals of the Romans and how the beloved ones were commemorated.

Nutrition:

The diet of an average Roman consisted of cereals, olives, wine, as well as fruits and legumes like chickpeas and lentils. Fish was a luxury and rarely eaten, and the primary source of protein came from pigs. Cereals in the form of bread and porridge were a

staple diet, as the monthly state distribution of free grain to the urban poor attests. The poor, mothers and young children were probably undernourished. And because the babies of well-to-do mothers were normally given to wet-nurses and, hence, denied colostrums, they were more vulnerable to illness. Food was transported into the city on wagons from suburban farms and the Pontine marshes, and via the Tiber on barges from the nearby port-city of Ostia. It was then distributed to the markets throughout the city. For example, the Cattle Market (Forum Boarium) was located at the foot of the Capitoline Hill (Capitolinum), near the Tiber. Since the cleanliness of these urban markets was marginal at best, there is no doubt that food contamination was a major problem, making intestinal parasites a common ailment. Because of its proximity to the Tiber, the Cattle Market was often flooded, and its provisions were therefore most likely contaminated on a fairly regular basis.

Sanitation:

While the public sewers in Rome were maintained by the State, private drains were the responsibility of the property owner and, hence, usually neglected. In fact, very few dwellings in the imperial capital were directly connected to either street drains or the public water supply. Kitchens were normally located near the households' latrine, which was little more than a cesspit, and had to be cleaned out by hand. An apartment complex may have had a latrine and fountain on the ground floor for its many residents. It was customary for those living on the upper floors, rather than using the latrine on the ground floor, to empty their chamber pots out of their windows. Since there was no public street cleaning service, the congested neighbourhoods were malodorous and plagued with flies and rats, which spread diseases.

Aquaducts daily channeled hundreds of millions of gallons of fresh water into Rome, supplying the hundreds of constantly running public and private fountains, the great public pools and baths, the provision for sham naval fights, etc. For a nominal fee, the common man could refresh himself or herself at one of the large imperial bath buildings (thermae), like the Baths of Caracalla, or a small privately owned neighbourhood establishment (balneum). The Baths of Caracalla were the city's second largest thermae after the Baths of Diocletian. They served as inspiration for many other constructions, ancient and modern, such as Pennsylvania Station in New York City, Chicago Union Station and the Senate of Canada. The Romans associated the baths with hygiene and health, and so statues of Asclepius (the god of healing) and his daughter Hygeia (good health) were a popular form of decoration in the baths. Spending time at the baths was an integral part of a Roman's daily ritual, with women visiting the baths in the morning and men in the afternoon. What is little known is that the sick and the healthy often bathed together, for doctors recommended that their patients regularly visit the baths in view of their supposed therapeutic value. The afflicted preferred to visit the baths at midday, or at night when the general public did not frequent them. The Romans did not have disinfectant and, while the evidence is scanty, it is likely that the bathing pools (which did not have running water) were only periodically emptied and cleaned. The picture that emerges is that Roman baths were not the pristine, hygienic places we imagine them to have been.

It was customary for the latrines either to be incorporated into a public baths building or adjacent to one. Usually a public latrine (forica) could accommodate between 10

and 20 people at a time, affording no privacy to its patrons. Water running through a channel beneath removed the waste, and toilet sponges on a stick were available for the patrons' use; obviously, these reusable sponges were breeding-grounds for bacteria.

Disease:

The metropolis suffered from epidemics that broke out at different times. Smallpox could devastate much of Roman society. It happened to so afflict the armies of the Empire that offensives had to be called off. It could affect the governing class to such an extent that governing bodies struggled to convene, the local magistracy remained unoccupied and government bodies failed for lack of administrators. The day to day killers, however, were infectious diseases like malaria (Plasmodium Falciparum, the most lethal), tuberculosis, typhoid fever, and certain digestive ailments like gastroenteritis. Studies suggest that the period from July to October was marked by high mortality, with about 30,000 residents dying, or about 3% of the total population. Roman authors refer to these months as 'sickly' and urged their fellow citizens to flee the town in order to take advantage of the healthy climate in the countryside. Comparatively speaking, there was low mortality from November to February, except for the elderly, who were particularly vulnerable to diseases during the winter months. The most deadly diseases to which Rome's population routinely succumbed were correlated to temperature, in particular the most lethal form of malaria, which has a long incubation period and loves a high temperature, and therefore reached its peak in autumn. Mortality rates in July to October may also have been caused by other factors, such as tuberculosis and typhoid, which could become fatal due to physical weakness from previous malaria attacks.

Given the close quarters in which the urban poor lived, their poor hygiene and undernourishment, as well as the constant influx into the city of migrants who had less immunity against their diseases, it is no wonder that infectious diseases were virulent killers. Because of these factors, the Roman Empire must have experienced extremely high infant mortality rates, of which no precise figures exist. This was partially compensated by early marriage and a much higher childbearing rate. Perhaps as many as half of Roman subjects had died by the age of 10. Of those still alive then, half would have died before the age of 50. The shortage could only be made up by steady immigration. This was primarily based on slave importation rather than free immigrants. Because of the large numbers of slaves, who were freed, and their much higher offspring than of the upper class of society, slaves and their descendants increasingly became part of the general population, which over time caused a significant shift in the original composition of its citizenship.

Death and Burial:

Evidence suggests that there was no great distinction in mortality rates between men and women, but it is likely that during epidemics women under 40 experienced a higher mortality than men. This can be explained by women's harder work regimes and poorer diets than those of their male counterparts, as well as the dangers associated with childbirth. On average, the life expectancy at birth of a woman was between 20 and 30 years and that of men somewhat higher. Of course, slaves had a shorter life expectancy, probably not living much beyond 20 years. It is estimated that more than half of all children up to age 10, at one time or another, suffered from malaria infection.

Virtually all burials took place outside Rome's city-limits, a custom that must have derived from concerns about the health of the urban environment and were in accordance to age-old taboos. Along the major highways leading into the city, like the Via Appia, there were cemeteries, with the tombs of the wealthiest families prominently displayed. In contrast, the bodies of the poorest Romans were anonymously buried in large open public pits (puticuli), like those outside the Esquiline Gate (Porta Esquilina). While Romans practiced both cremation and inhumation, they preferred cremation. The crematories were safely situated at the periphery of the city, adjacent to the cemeteries.

It was the duty of a Roman family and of its heir in particular, to make funeral arrangements for a loved one. The ceremony of the funeral and the size of the tomb displayed the family's social status and financial resources. Hiring a large number of female mourners (praeficae) to attend the corpse in the home (collocatio) and to walk in procession to the tomb (exsequiae) was an ostentatious sign of a family's prominence. At the low end of the social spectrum were the slaves. The urban poor where often dumped like rubbish in the outskirts and subsequently transported to the communal burial-pits by public undertakers (libitinarii). To the Romans' sensibilities, the worst fate was dying in anonymity, for it was the remembrance of the deceased (memoria) that secured immortality.

For the vast majority of the population, that is, for the families of freed slaves, and for slaves provided for by their masters, the cremated remains could be stored in a public place (columbarium) outside the city limits. A columbarium was normally a subterranean structure with in its walls niches for ash-urns (cineraria). Beneath each niche a stone epitaph was nailed to the wall, identifying the deceased. Ancient sources reveal that the most expensive burial niches were those at or near ground level and the cheapest those which were least accessible and less visible. Family members routinely visited the columbarium to bring flowers and gifts (like lamps and vessels with food and libation) in honored memory of their loved ones. Over the years many columbaria have been discovered outside the Roman city walls and emptied of their contents, most often without careful documentation. Nevertheless, the ash-urns, grave-goods and epitaphs removed from these tombs have provided archaeologists and historians with valuable information about Roman burial customs.

Remark by Hubert Luns: The appalling sanitary and hygienic conditions in ancient Rome underscore that the hygienic precepts given at Mount Sinai were God-given, were in fact an anomaly in the evolution of humankind, an anachronism. Thanks to the ever-flowing Nile River, hygienic conditions were at a higher level in ancient Egypt than in the Roman metropolis, although outside Rome, in the small towns and in the countryside, things were better too. Yet the agricultural most productive lands, like the Pontine marshes (extending along the coast southeast of Rome and linked to the town by the Via Appia), were additional sources for disease. It was Mussolini, who in 1932 was the first to install an effective drainage system for the Pontine marshes and succeeded to permanently remove the infestation.

PART 2 – Ch.1

The Stages of Creation

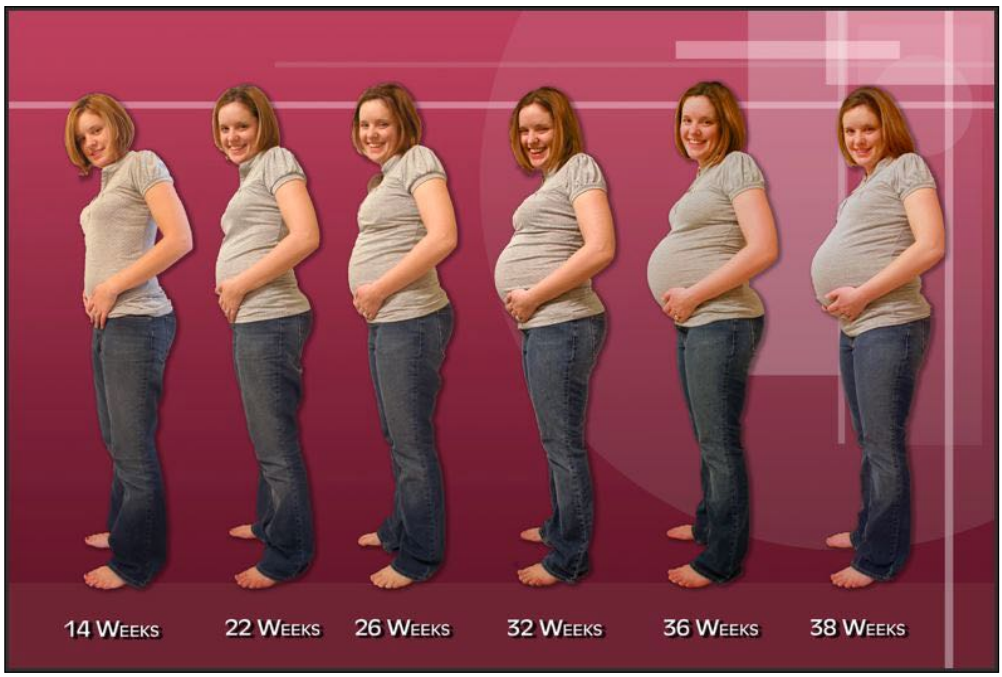

photo Abardwell

This part on the nature of the soul is somewhat unusual, hence my recommendation to read it several times. It examines the stages of creation of the soul from a mystical-theological viewpoint. It could also have been called: "From gamete to homunculus" or "God's interventions from the unfertilised egg cell to the tiny person that still has to be born". This is a miraculous story, one that summons to give thanks. It focusses our thoughts on the abortion hecatomb, which in 2010 claimed more than 100x the number of victims of the Shoa or Jewish Holocaust. Hence I pray with the psalmist: "My soul follows close behind you; Your right hand upholds me. But those who seek my life, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth." (Ps. 63:9-10, 139:15)

13 – The four stages of creation and the ten utterances of creation

The first verse of the book of Genesis says: "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* According to the original text this verse can very well be translated as: "**Through** the principle, God created heaven and earth" instead of "**In** the beginning". And that principle, in and with God, is of course the Word made flesh in Christ, also called the first-born in Colossians 1:15-16: *"He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation, for by Him all things were created…"* In this context the Jewish expression for first-born would be for first-born "the first fruits of vigour".

The creation of a human being, from nought – that is, out of the image of that person in God's mind or the image he is called to become – can be compared to this creation process, just mentioned, since here 'the human being' is made in God's image. Despite

all the frantic efforts made in our society to ruin that sacred image, we are and remain - in Christ Jesus - God's creation. (Eph. 2:10) So let us take a look at what insights we can gain from the process of creation and generation as presented in the Old Testament.

Jewish tradition states that the process of creation, as it appears in the first Bible chapter, consists of the four stages of creation, that is, the four invisible and inner movements, here a reference to Isaiah 43:7:

1) Someone who is named after My Name (Genesis 1:1-2);
2) whom I generated (Genesis 1:3-10);
3) whom I formed (Genesis 1:11-31); and
4) whom I made / 'asa' (Genesis 2:2-3).

In that sense, and according to the Jewish tradition, the 4 stages refer to the four Hebrew letters of God's sacred Name, the name Yahweh (yod, he, vav, he). The word 'son' in Hebrew has a value of four, which points at the four stages, and at the beginning of his gospel the Apostle John writes about the Son: *"All things were made by Him: without Him was not anything made that was made."*

The Jewish tradition extrapolates the four stages of creation to the ten utterances of the creation as being a representation of the outer movements of creation. The Talmud notes that there are but nine utterances and suggests that the all-embracing *"In the Beginning"* is also an utterance or command, in fact 'the' utterance. (Megillah 21b) There may be a difference of opinion on this, because *"In the beginning"* is not a 'utterance' or command, but an inner movement of thought, identified by: *"someone who is named after my Name"*, which Psalm 33:9 reasserts: *"He spoke and it was"*, i.e. with one divine call, and thereafter: *"He commanded and it arose"*. The first movement – not uttered but pronounced in the thought of God from the beginning until the end in the one breath Aleph-Tau (from a till z) – consists of making in terms of 'bara', also used in Genesis 1:1. It is a capsule that contains everything else. It is the one seed of all future generations. Thus it is that Isaiah 41:4 states: *"Who has performed and done it, calling into existence the generations as from the very beginning? I, the Lord, am the first; and with the last I am He."* This capsule of creation thus includes all the stages of creation – including all potentially fulfillable alternative choices – and may nonetheless be added as the first stage so as to add up to ten. The extraordinary thing is that in God's thought this capsule of all times includes only one moment, for in God there is no time; everything is laid out before His mind's eye as if by a working schedule. Although in God the Father there is no time, it is

thanks to the Son that sequentiality is made possible. As Jesus is from the Father, then His sonship must be as eternal as the Father Himself, at least if He is begotten from the same essence as the Father. Therefore, there was no time without the Son, which is followed by a time with the Son. The following formulation seems warranted: although in the Father no time exists, this sequentiality can be made to exist in the Son. Otherwise the Bible would not say that *"through Christ all things were created. (...) and that everything was created by Him and for Him; He is before everything and everything exists in Him."* (Col. 1:16-17, John 1:1-3) If true, this timeless 'capsule' (timeless from the perspective of God the Father) has been made temporal in Christ and thus we may say: as it was in the beginning of creation it is now and always, to the ages of ages. Note that 'beginning' implies sequentiality.

We find the same kind of approach in the Ten Commandments, engraved by God on the stone tablets. (Ex. 34:28) The manner of counting in Exodus 20 verses 1 til 17 (cf. Deut. 5) has always been a subject of discussion. In fact there are nine commandments, since the first two belong together and thus constitute a single commandment: *"I am the Lord your God; you shall have no other gods before Me."* Because of this issue, the Samaritan sect saw as the additional 10th commandment to proclaim the Ten Commandments on Mount Gerizim. (Deut. 11:27-29) A common explanation is that in the one breath when *"God spoke «all» the words"* (Ex. 20:1), all possible commandments and bans are to be found, and thus also the very extensive corpus contained in the book Leviticus. As the great Thomas Aquinas used to say: *"Our intellect does not simultaneously understand everything, or with one act, but by many different acts; therefore the words of our intellect are many. But God understands everything simultaneously by one single act, because his understanding must be one, since it is his very being. It follows therefore that in God there is only One Word."* [40)]

You who plumb my essence...

- Text H. Jongerius; translated MJC

You who plumb my essence and heart,
The words that are kept hid in my mouth,
Know all my ways and walk at my side:
How wonderful is your secret to me.

You who have seen me while still in the womb,
Called me to life in the red light of dawn,
Have known and loved me from my first beginning:
How your great name awakens my awe.

Wherever I go, 't is not far from You,
You are there in my heartbeat, here and now,
As breath that gives strength and makes me advance:
Who am I if You do not call me by name?

Give me then power in both word and deed,
Re-make me again in the darkness of night:
So that I may live as a Man in your light
And some time may look on your eternal face.

40) "De rationibus fidei contra Saracenos, Graecos et Armenos ad Cantorem Antiochenum" by Thomas Aquinas (Ch. 3).

Despite the Talmudic explanation of the four stages of creation, it is easy to identify ten utterances or commandments within the six days of creation. It just depends on what one takes as definition for the divine acts of creation compared to human acts of creation in terms of rearrangments. A rearrangement of objects, which creates something like a bicycle, is an aggregation of pre-existing materials. This distinction is revealed by the Hebrew word 'bara/baruch' on the one hand and 'asa' on the other.

The counting to 10, as an alternative to the Talmudic approach, goes as follows. Two commands consist of a 'blessing' (baruch), which are creative acts, one on the 5th and one on the 6th day. Seven commands consist of 'divine acts of creation' (bara): 1. 'Light'; 2. 'The firmament'; 3. 'Vegetation'; 4. 'Sky lights'; 5. 'Life in sea and sky'; 6. 'Life on land'; and finally: 7. 'The HUMAN BEING' (on the 6th day). These acts could not have existed without the *"in the Beginning"* that preceded them. Because 'in the Beginning' is in terms of bara (bereshit bara in Hebrew), it counts as a divine act of creation. Added together we get ten: 2 blessings +(7+1).[41)]

In the six-day creation story of Genesis 1, we also discover divine intervention in the sense of making/re-arranging or 'asa', and it goes as follows: 1. 'Separation of light and darkness'; 2. 'Separation of the waters'; 3. 'Confluence of waters'; 4. 'Separation of day and night'. Take note that the creation of the HUMANS Adam & Eve is not included, for that occurred in terms of bara. But yet their dual calling should be included (verse 28): *"Be fruitful"* (not only for having children but also metaphorically), as well as: *"Subject the earth."* That adds up to 6. Soon after the sixth-day-creation of Adam and Eve, the next day or stage began with their expulsion from Paradise. Remarkably, this seventh stage is divided into seven compartments again – of a thousand years each (in a kind of Mandelbrot repetition). Do be aware that the completed creation consists of 7 days plus 1. So there is still a way to go. The time we are now living in, is the sixth compartment (the 6th millennium after Adam). We are on the verge of entering the seventh.[42)] We are standing at the gateway of the 7th day of the making (the seventh compartment), that of the Millennial Reign (the olam haba), for 6000 years have already passed since Adam. After that seventh, a new octave will be initiated on the cosmic keyboard to which the Bible is otherwise silent.

14 – The objective and subjective state of being

Our focus now is on the 10 commands of creation: multiplied by the 4 movements (of creation) makes 40, a very important symbolic number. This number, we learn, is linked to creating. That offers surprising insights into the unfolding of newly conceived life. Thus Leviticus 12 stipulates that a mother giving birth to a son is unclean for 7 days, followed by 33 days of seclusion. However, if a daughter is born, the time frames should be doubled. Those are the 'days of niddah' (the niddah is a menstruating woman). It appears that 7 + 33 = 40 and 14 + 66 = 80 or twice forty.

Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan quotes the Jewish wise men, who say that the 7 + 33 days here represent the time for an embryo to take on the first phase of human form, required to

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41) The 2+(7+1) also reads as 1+(2+7), or 1+9, reminiscent of the 10 Commandments. A correct count of the Ten Commandments adds up to nine. Number 10 is then the preamble: "Then God spoke..." That 'one' Word of God, who surveys everything at a glance, includes not only the Nine Commandments but the entire body of law, of which the Book of Leviticus and our inborn knowledge of good and bad are excerpts. In analogy, the one sigh "bereshit bara" created the entire creation, from the very first alpha to very last omega.

42) 7+1 is symbolically equal to 7 squared plus 1, which equals 50, a number that returns in the so-called jubilee year, as defined in Leviticus 25.

take on the condition of a foetus. This is the point alluded to by David in Psalm 139:16: *"Thine eyes did see my substance (the substance of David) not yet being formed."*

An explanation of the foregoing is not so obvious because the 'days of niddah' start for both boy and girl at the very moment of birth (it is difficult to imagine otherwise), while in the symbolic interpretation, related to the development of the embryo and the foetus, the numbers 40 and 80 must be placed one after the other and not overlapping, what will be discussed later. That is why the rabbis have recognised the meaning of 40 but not of 80, even though it is obvious that also in 80 lies hidden a profound meaning regarding the process of the creation of a human, a meaning that must have been lost in the course of the centuries.[43)] The prescribed 7 and 14 days of uncleanness could indicate the required period after conception for adplantation and the implantation of the ovum (7 days +) until the beginning of cell differentiation (14 days), marked by the formation of the primitive streak. This also marks the end of possible embryonic duplication.

Psalm 139:16 is the only place in the Bible where the word 'golem' appears, translated as *"Thine eyes did see my substance (golem) not yet being formed"*. This verse has taken on important significance in Jewish mysticism that has always related it to the 'inwardness of creation', a term borrowed from Gershom Scholem. The term homunculus (little human – as from 120 days) is inspired by the better part of this tradition and not by something else. This *"Thine eyes did see my substance"* does not refer to the moment of conception for that is in the Name of God (the first of the four stages) and not of David's. Nor does it refer to the embryonic stage immediately afterwards, for that is then still in the objective state of being. (In my approach, the first 14 days are already in the embryonic stage.) If not in the objective state of being, the embryo would not be able to split into twins or vice versa: two separate and fertilized embryos would not be able to recombine into one 'mosaic' body.

The beginning of human life takes off at the penetration of the plasma membrane by the spermatozoa. The 'interaction' of the sperm with the plasma membrane of the oocyte (egg), and not the subsequent fertilization, stimulates its development into an embryo. For instance, it is easy to induce an unfertilised frog egg to begin development by pricking it with a fine needle dipped in blood. Note that blood cells are necessary for mytosis to proceed normally. Even adult rabbits, that are mammals just like us, have been produced from unfertilised eggs by similar procedures. These and other experiments are artificial, yet indicate that the moment of conception is not determined by fertilization, which means the union of two gamete nuclei.

In 1960, the Food and Drug Administration accepted the contraceptive pill, making the United States the first country in the world to accept this kind of intervention. Until then, the consensus was that human life begins at conception, that is, at the fusion of male and female DNA. Realizing that the new contraceptive methods were not only contraceptive, but in addition, and at an early stage, abortifacient, the American Gynecologists Association decided in 1965 to modify the definition of conception and pregnancy. This was to avoid possible difficulties if the public became aware of the facts, and also to speed up the legal acceptance of the new methods in the other countries. The new definition was a sales trick for the benefit of big money and the secret agendas of the Lodges (Freemasonry). It was decided that henceforth conception would be regarded as such when the egg cell had settled in the wall of the uterus at about a

43) Many theologians from the Middle Ages until the middle of the 19th century held the opinion that the male soul is not created in the body until the 40th day after conception. They also believed that the female soul is not created in the body until the 80th day after conception.

week after fertilization, and only then would they call it pregnancy. With that, the new methods of the IUD, the regular 'pill' and the 'morning-after pill', could innocently be called contraceptives, which sounds more innocent than interruption of pregnancy.

15 – In His NAME

In view of some ethical considerations that have been in vogue during the long history of our Church, and in view of the argument that the immortal ensoulment does not happen during the embryonic and immature stages, it might be inferred that the practice of abortus/partus provocatus, although objectionable, is not yet murder. Only after infusion of the immortal it would become murder. My answer is as follows. It is a fact that the life of each human being begins at conception or cell penetration. However, at that special moment and during the embryonic development process, it cannot be determined with certainty whether this human life is viable. Therefore, any provoked termination of pregnancy [44)] as from conception/cell penetration, should be seen as an intervention to take away the life of a child wanted by God, because God does know where that new life will lead to, that was made in his Name (1st stage of the four). Each child brought forth, as from the very beginning, is every time wanted and loved by God, especially so because the ensoulment into an homunculus is each time again a supernatural and heavenly intervention, a new act of creation from individual to individual, from God to child. This explains why a provoked termination of pregnancy is, to say the least, an attempt at murder, which in the moral sense of the word turns the perpetrators into murderers, with the exception of the extra-uterine pregnancy (ectopic pregnancy) where with the current state of the art, only the life of the mother can be saved. With this exception, provoked abortion is never medically necessary to save a woman's life. In ethics a distinction is made between a provoked termination of a pregnancy and the unintended death of the child, as a collateraal effect of certain interventions.[45)]

In the ancient religious belief, man is made in the abyss. As to Psalm 139 verses 14 and 15, David was made wonderfully, indicating the moment of conception, and he was wrought in the hidden and lowest parts of the earth, which indicates the embryonic development. Only when it has become a foetus, at day 40 (and not in the 8th week), does it enter the subjective condition of being, the condition meant by verse 16, already referred to. Once a foetus, the laying down of the hundreds of fundamental tissues, has been completed and the rudiments of primitive organs and organ systems are already present. *"All my members are written, which in continuance are fashioned."* During the subsequent 80 days the foetus evolves into an homunculus (little human), the stage at which all the organs start to become functional.

Once an homunculus - thus after 120 days - and after having conversed with God (JNSR 31-7-2009), the immortal soul is infused, which fits Genesis 1:27. That specific moment is the incarnation, to which a Midrashic exposition subscribes: *"And God created Adam. This is the eternal Just. He has formed him from a Heavenly formation and from an earthly one."* Take note: this also happened to the God-man Jesus Christ. In the legend of Sanhedrin 38b Adam is called 'golem' (literally 'clay figure'), meaning that in the first hours of his existence he was an earthly formation without soul.

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44) The termination of pregnancy may be defined as follows: until 100 days, 'abortion', 100-120 days: 'partus immaturus'; 120-250 days: 'partus præmaturus' (the days being counted from conception). After a provoked partus, it is remarkable that a 120-day-old homunculus, if abandoned, will fight for its life for several hours. Præmaturus would thus seem to be a suitable term. Currently, the term is used only after 180 days because of the better chances of survival. However, even an older baby will die if abandoned.

The word ‘golem’, or its derivatives, denote incompletion, an intermediate phase in the development towards a genuine creature. And so the ‘golems’ created by rabbis in the Jewish legends could not speak, not having received the breath of life in an alliance with God.

16 – The meaning of cell differentiation

In the scientific literature known to me, the definition of the developmental stages of the human embryo is based on the appearance of cell clusters (as in the Carnegie stages). I am particularly interested in the first differentiation into the different phenomenological forms (starting with a single germ cell), which at a later stage leads to newly defined tissue forms being the emergence of rudimentary organs. The first differentiation precedes the cluster form. We may safely say that the first stage of the laying down of the hundreds of fundamental tissues, which I tentatively place at around day 40, precedes the beginning of the clearly visible fetal stage. Blechschmidt’s embryonic calendar places the early development of almost all definitive organs in the second lunar month. He places the beginnings of foetal development in the third lunar month; some place it at day 49. He continues to call it fetus until birth. From the fourth month (i.e., around day 120) he speaks of the *“late intra-uterine development until birth”,* which corresponds to our concept of homunculus. His scheme is mainly ontogenetically determined and does not contradict mine, being based on different premises. Nevertheless, it seems appropriate to also introduce ontogenetically the concept of homunculus, which remains applicable even after birth, because it indicates that the growth process is a continuous one. Terminology is important: homunculus encourages greater respect for the still unborn human being.

Thus, the genesis of human life progresses seamlessly from one stage to another, within the modus of 40 days and in line to the male-female or object-subject duality. The male ingredient represents the systematic and schematic and therefore the development of the embryo up to day 40. Only after the involvement of the female ingredient the male side can start to become viable. But the female can function only after the other has accomplished its task. The female part encorporates the richness of forms, as if it were giving flesh to the skeleton. That is why it supports the fashioning of foms of the foetus that finally leads to the homunculus at day 120, or 3 x 40. Once an homunculus, a process of growing or transformation (asa) follows which, incidentally, does not stop at birth. By no means.

The observation that the homunculus arises at 120 days after conception (or 19 weeks after the start of the last menstruation), is no justification for a provoked abortion. As we have seen, human conception is in in the ‘Name of God’, so that even the so-called ‘morning-after pill’ as well as the IUD is taboo (Intra Uterine Device), or spiral, that prevents the implantation of the fertilized egg.[46)] The large percentage of spontaneous abortions in the first days, more than half, provides no valid argument because the motive for intervention disregards any such possibility (otherwise there would be no

45) See in particular §57-62 of Pope John-Paul II’s 11th Encyclical “Evangelium Vitæ” published in 1995, which also discusses broader ethical issues such as euthanasia and in vitro fertilization.

46) An IUD substantially increases the risk of ectopic pregnancy. Surgery afterward usually destroys the affected fallopian tube.

need for it); the motive is simply to remove any possibility, large or small, of a pregnancy coming to term.

The biogenesis just described, where the scheme should be indicative, corresponds to the four stages of creation already mentioned, viz:

1) in the beginning (conception);
2) generation (embryo);
3) formation (foetus);
4) transformation / rearrangement (homunculus / human).

It is undeniable that the numbers 40 and 4 have religious connotations regarding the creation process in general and the human gestation in particular.

Initiation: the penetration of the plasma membrane
Photo Lennart Nilsson

17 – After birth

The (trans)formative process continues after birth, first within the 'womb' of the family and later it occurs in society, following similar principles as seen in the foetal and embryonic development, but at this stage with distinctive focus on the qualities of the mind. These principles imply that the impulses for development from now on come from the outside, to be subsequently embodied in the growing child, for the purpose of maintaining its identity, i.e., the capacity for emotional stability. And it exerts a will to conform to these impulses out of sheer joy of life (that joy is quite often taken away in our educational institutions). Another important principle implies that if something has not been initiated early on it cannot advance to a higher level in the adult; a child that is given no love has difficulty giving love as an adult. Similarly, something that has been perversely initiated will at a later stage be perversely exercised, as witness the psychological ills of many, which often find their origin in the initial period of life.

According to Cliff Anderson's remarkable maturation theory, a person develops from concrete highly personal experiences along an innate maturation path to finally arrive at contextual thinking. Growing up, Anderson says, results from the mind's innate drive to understand the world. The individual moves from childhood (concrete thinking) through adolescence (abstract thinking) to youth (relativistic thinking), to arrive at adulthood (which adds intuitive thinking). Key components of maturity are contextual or relativistic thinking that allows someone to look at a problem from a different vantage point in which the person has no intimate involvement, and also allows for intuitive thinking. It supports nuanced thinking and enables one to identify with others, to identify with them as real people. People who have not mastered this to a sufficient degree should not be allowed in leadership positions, because they are unable to oversee all the ramifications of their decisions. This is also why young people should not

be given top positions, because their world is too much black and white without shades of gray. The essential indicator of this adult phase is our capacity to utilize intuition as a sixth sense along with those five that receive physical stimuli from the extrapsychic world. With intuition's ascendence, our ideas of people and things embody themselves less in picture-like form and more in dynamically based functional conceptions that tell us, for example, toward what end an internal change in something or someone is leading. With intuition, we can fathom the essence of something out there that we may never have encountered with our other senses; we can oversee totalities from which to conceive inferences, and thus comprehend complicated transformation processes in ourselves and in our world that more or less match reality, while the other kind of thinking leads to a fantasized make-believe reality. Anderson remarks that: [47)]

> «« …at birth the mind is in a primitive, undifferentiated state, unable to build even the most elementary understanding of the world. And it will require some three decades of nearly continuous development for the mind to establish enough psychological abilities to construct a fully correct understanding of the (outside) world. (…) what we are now calling the midlife crisis is what actually marks the transition from immaturity to maturity. (…) These psychological advances are not accomplished in the classical evolutionary sense. Rather, they reflect movement down a preexisting path – a template every bit as inherent as the physical one that creates the brain, the heart, and the muscles in the arm. »»

Jewish tradition subscribes to this view, because it teaches that a person should only start to explore the inner world, the world of mystical experience, at age 40. Only then is that person reckoned to have reached sufficient maturity and emotional stability. It should be noted that only a limited portion of humanity reaches full psychological maturity. Many get stuck along the way. I have known someone who had a normal intellectual capacity, but had remained emotionally a small child and therefore could remember all the names of the children in her class in elementary school as well as the names of the various 'misses' she had had at school.

A reader wrote: "Many thanks for your impressive article on human development in the womb. I was impressed, and also touched, by the large quantity of 'symbolism'. This is a word used in our Western notions to place something outside our reality and logic while, as your article shows, it is even introduced physically by God. It would seem that wherever God brings distinctive (life) into being, we humans run the risk of bringing death or at least deadliness into being through the method applied by distinctions (analysis, reduction)."

18 – The symbolic number 40, image of two worlds

The systematic use of 40 in the Bible means that its significance is not a mere symbolic curiosity. This number 40 refers to water (mem). The knowledge of God is compared to the waters that cover the seabed, to use a quotation from Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan (1935-1983). The bor, Hebrew for spring or source, must contain 40 sa'a (se'ah), a biblical measure (1 sa'a equals 7.3 litres / 2 gallons). It seems this quantity is required because 40 has something to do with the body, especially the 'entire' body, which makes us think of the Jewish ritual bath for women, known as the Mikveh.[48)] Symbolically speaking, the fall in Paradise involves the body of the human collectivity, i.e. the entire body of our society. Since the manipulation of that 'body', that expresses itself as the

47) "The Stages of Life – A groundbreaking discovery: the steps to psychological maturity" by Clifford Anderson - The Atlantic Monthly Press # 1995 (p. 20, 134).

power of mass ecstasy and delusion, is the snake's or demon's greatest triumph, it is said that the body has become trapped in the pit or prison. (Lam. 4:20) The plan of creation aims at freeing us once again, to rid us of the collective traumas and to free us from the power that is dogging us. Mikveh and womb represent an image of water. The return to the amniotic fluid, where in the beginning form was lacking and everything contained in promise, is a notion that fits with the process of (re)-creation. Neither medium allows breathing, but the grave represents dying and the womb (re)birth. Consequently, as the teaching goes, the water of the central part of the mikveh, the 'bor', must contain the 'entire' body of 40 sa'a.

> ***The exaltedness of our soul***
>
> Have you ever considered seriously the exaltedness of this soul, which is a divine breath that animates you and which in some way participates in the infinity from which it was drawn? Infinity in its spirit, always able to acquire new knowledge; infinity in its will, its desires and its love can only be confined by the infinite; infinity in its value, all the riches of heaven and earth cannot do her justice; the soul of the least of men is worth more than the whole universe; an infinity in its duration, for after being created it is eternal; infinity in its capacity and in its activity; in an instant it traverses the sky and the earth; it transports itself without a medium from one end of the world to the other; its ideas multiply like a single object; the histories and the epochs are stored in the treasure of its memory; it puts them back without anything being disturbed.
>
> "A Treatise on Interior Peace"
> Père Ambroise de Lombez (†1778) Ch. VI-I.

I read in the writings of Rabbi Kaplan that the largest (spiritual) body in existence contains 20 sa'a, not 40 but 20 sa'a. And thus 40 represents a double totality. We could say: two worlds, of which one will end up in burning.[49)] The room of the Holy of Holies (where they kept the stone tablets) measured 20x20x20. What does that mean for our discussion? Could it be as follows? If something mixes with its antagonist of the same volume it can be considered, as a rule, to be compensated; its former properties will be annulled.[50)] Hence, the amount of water before annulment of the character of the first body should be twice as large and count 40 sa'a. Therefore, the two tablets with the Ten Commandments also weighed 40 sa'a. These represented the heart of stone which, at the time of the restoration of the paradisiacal state, is going to be changed into a heart of flesh. Maria Divine Mercy says in Jesus' message of Sept. 1st 2014: *"All that was in the beginning will be in the end. All life created by God will be renewed just as it was when Paradise was created for the human race."*

Rabbi Kaplan contends, in what is the remnant of an oral tradition, the meaning of which has been lost, that the water in the Mikveh is not allowed to flow. The water used for the Mikveh is drawn from living or flowing water, but after it has flown into its cistern it should retain its shape. Could that mean that the mixing with the pharmakon athanasias or 'the medicine for immortality'[51)] has to wait until a certain critical point in time? The two, the human form and the 'God with us', are together in one

48) The so-called Mikveh bath is a place where (orthodox) Jewish women go for purification after a menstrual period, but it is sometimes used by men and converts. An unmarried woman who goes to the mikveh and sleeps with her boyfriend is committing a lesser offence, according to Jewish law, than a married Jewish couple that have sexual relations without the woman first going to the mikveh (from Rabbi Telushkin's Jewish Literacy, p. 619). Therefore, in orthodox circles an unmarried woman is not permitted to go to a mikveh, to ensure that premarital sex does not ensue.

body measuring 40 sa'a, but each world (each time a totality) keeps its constitution as long as there is no mixing. Twice a totality, it appears as if God is the god of good and evil. In paradise He tells Adam and Eve that henceforth men will know Him as such. It seems as if He is his own adversary. In the body of 40 sa'a, image of humanity, He dwells with what is from Himself and what his Love continually reaches out to. He too is dwelling in the depths, together with us, but separated. As long as this situation endures, we have to do with the 'fallen Man' who, though a creature of God, has not yet attained the true childhood of walking in his Will.

"A Child is Born" by Lennart Nilsson

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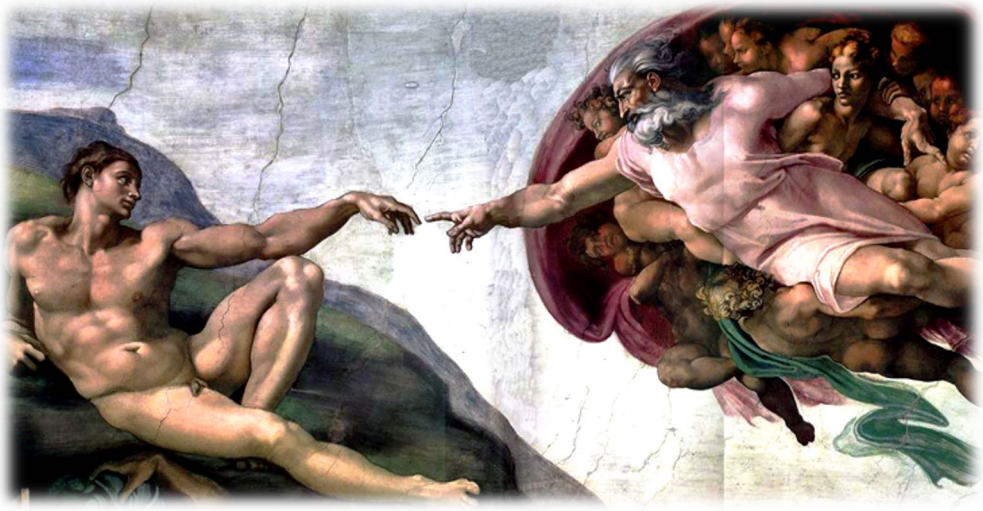
49) The end of the Bible, called judgement day, is not necessarily the end of the world. It is merely a closing chapter of an important episode and the end of the world as it is known today. 'World' can be understood as a moral entity or as a composition of matter. The meaning of 2 Peter 3:10-12 is then placed in a totally different light: "The day of the Lord will come (...) in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. (...) Whilst the saints are eagerly looking for and hastening the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat." That it involves a moral entity despite the fact that there is also an awful lot of material destruction, appears also from the word 'elements' derived from the Greek 'stocheion', which represents an orderly arrangement as we can see in a military march.

50) "If something mixes with its antagonist of the same volume it can be considered, as a rule, to be compensated; its former properties will be annulled." This is a deep thought. It seems that creation out of nothing (ex nihilo) is based on separation that causes distinction (i.e. Gen. 1:6). Everything appears to have its antagonist, even the universe seems to have a twin universe, which is enantiomorphic with an opposite arrow of time and is made up of antimatter (i.e. electrons with a positive rather than a negative charge), at least according to Nobel laureate Sakharov (from 1967 onwards) and Jean-Pierre Petit (Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Sciences de Paris, 28th March 1977). Enantiomorph means that something has a complementary twin and that both cancel each other out.

51) The term 'pharmacon athanasias', 'the medicine for immortality', was used for the first time in the "Ad Ephesios" (20:PG5, 661) by the martyr Ignatius of Antioch, bishop of Antioch in the first century of our calendar, by which he meant the Eucharistic bread, also called by him the "antidote against death".

APPENDIX 10

‘In the Image of God’



The doctrine of man’s creation in the image of God is the basis of the theology of the Fathers of the Church, as concerns the place and calling of each human being in God’s plan. The expression ‘In the image of God’ is found in the first book of the Bible, where is written:

> «« Then God said: Let Us make man in our image, after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. »» (Gen. 1:26-27)

These are, perhaps, the verses of the Old Testament most commented on by the Fathers. We can assume that they were living in accordance with the teachings of the faith and its practice which were prevalent in the purer forms of early and ardent Christianity, and so it is an appropriate object of study. The ‘Fathers’ belong to the period that stretches from the 4th until the 64th Pope, both of whom (the 4th and the 64th pope) are also considered to be Fathers of the Church. Gregory the Great, who came last, died in the year 604.

What is the Christian point of view in this respect? The fact that the first humans are said to have been created in the image and likeness of God demonstrates the calling to sanctification and glorification of each human being, that it may not only be an image, but also to become a likeness not yet realized. For this reason the Fathers gave so much attention to these verses, which can be viewed as a miniature of the first chapters of Genesis, that run all the way to the story of the Tower of Babel. In later chapters, other themes become prominent. The pattern sketched in these earlier chapters in terms of the the Creation and Fall is not something the Jews recognize: to them the Fall was not a dramatic incident in the history of humankind, but merely one of the many examples of human failure, seen in the light of the Covenant.

The most important scriptural reason why these early chapters of Genesis, and in especially these verses, assume so much weight for Patristic and subsequent Christian theology, is Paul's understanding of Jesus as the Second Adam or human (the Hebrew 'adam' means human), as expressed in his first letter to the Corinthians:

> «« As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. It is written, the first man Adam became *"a living soul"*. But the last Adam became a life-giving spirit; the first man was from the earth, a man of dust, the second is from Heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of Heaven. »» (Gen. 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:22, 45-49)

If the significance of Christ is evoked by such a contrast between Him and Adam, then the story of Adam and Eve and their immediate progeny takes on an important symbolic meaning to help make sense of our depraved human condition. Nonetheless, the cosmic dimension of creation-incarnation-deification does not supplant the human position of the drama of creation and in the end of redemption itself. In fact, it is rather the opposite, for Man is not only the object of salvation but is also invested with a participatory cosmic task. That, at least, was the thinking of the Church Fathers.

We may state that the ultimate justification for the high doctrine of the cosmic role of each human within the collective human family, and therefore also of the unborn human in the womb, not only lies in the observation that all those human beings are time and again created in the image of God. This text is very summary, like an unopened triptych, for a human being, as bearing the divine image, is not something that recurs much in the Old Testament; outside the Book Genesis there are occasional echoes, no more. Nor is it very prominent in the New Testament, but to the Fathers it is center stage. As Père Camelot remarked:

> «« This theme of the 'image' is pre-eminent in the theology of the Fathers, above all of the Greek Fathers. In that doctrine there converge at once their christology and theology of the Trinity, their anthropology and psychology, their theology of creation and that of grace, the problem of nature and of the supernatural, the mystery of deification, the theology of the spiritual life and the laws of its development and of its progress! »»

Let us be aware of our calling, to which you and to which I am called, because it is from this sublime awareness of our dignity that we are gently guided to correspondingly behave ourselves, and along the way are to become better people pleasing to God.

Study Material:

"Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture" (vol. 1, p. xxxix e.v. en p. 27)

As regards Père Th. Camelot, see «Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques» # 1956 (pp. 443-44), under "La Théologie de l'Image de Dieu".

APPENDIX 11

This double Body that God has given us

Ascension of Christ, Church of the Nativity in Monongahela Pennsylvania

The following text is taken from "Witness of God to his little souls", message of 7th June 2008 to JNSR. The messenger represents a mother, now resident in Brittany. Her initials signify "Je ne suis rien" (I am nothing), or "Jésus notre Seigneur revient" (Jesus our Lord returns).

Our soul, this second body, and our spirit which animates it, are identified by St Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:23: *"May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole* ***spirit, soul and body****, be preserved blameless at the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ."*

It is our soul that animates our *"lowly body"* says St Paul *"that it may be conformed to his glorious Body."* Philippians 3:20-21: *"For us, our Homeland is in Heaven, whence comes the Saviour we are ardently waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transfigure our **wretched body** in order that it may conform to his **Glorious Body**, by that Power He has to subdue all things to Himself."*

This Glorious Body is already part of us and is in the **process of becoming**; it will be something other than our body of flesh, but nevertheless the same and similar to that of the risen JESUS. It is about a new creation as announced so many times in the Bible:

- Isaiah 11:6-9 : *"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb."*
- Isaiah 66:22 : *"For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make."*
- Romans 8:22-23 : *"For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now. (...) Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body."*
- In Revelation 21:5 : *"Behold, I make all things new."* A new Creation unstained by sin. Purified.

That Glorious Body, through the soul created in God, already dwells in us. Let us respect it in its actual bodily form. This *"body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit"* (1 Cor. 6:19). God *"will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you."* (Rom. 8:11).

In 1 Corinthians 15:42-44 St Paul writes: *"The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a **psychic body**, it is raised a **spiritual body**."* (Instead of psychic body the usual translation is 'natural' body, in Greek 'psuchikos'.)

And again in St Paul, 1 Thess. 4:15-18 :

> «« For this we say to you by the Word of the Lord [which is a prophetic mystery], that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. »»

The **psychic body** [the soul] is invisible. It is in our body, a spark of Divine Life that God puts in each of us ever since the heritage borne in Adam who received Life from God through the Divine Breath from the mouth of God, which God blew into his nostrils.

The Lord says to us: *"I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."*

It happens if someone had a leg amputated, he continues to complain about the pain in his absent foot, which is always present in the invisibility of his psychic body, which suffers from the separation of the amputated limb, the one that had always been part of him since the origin and formation of his being.

APPENDIX 12

Organ donation, a matter of life and death

Review of a Dutch publication (515 pages)

Author Ruud van der Ven

Orgaandonatie, een zaak van leven en dood - MAATKAMP PUBLISHING # 2022

Link: https://www.boekhandel.org/product/9789491706943

Ruud van der Ven, who died in 2023, was a physician and studied theology. He was a teacher at the Dutch Evangelical Theological College and the Evangelical Training School. He frequently provided lectures and had speaking engagements on topics of faith and health. He has several books to his name. Among his Dutch books are:

— "None Other Than Jesus Alone. An ex-naturalist tells of the only way out of an occult nightmare" # 1993.

— "From ailment to worse? Alternative medicine discussed by an ex-naturalist" # 1997.

— "Veils over Scripture. Entering into another world?" # 2006.

— And in 2011 a scientific publication: "Complementary and alternative care in Dutch hospitals: description of a development".

The basis of this book is a scientific edition, but in order to make it accessible to a wider audience, this format was chosen. It is written in such a way that not only someone who normally has no involvement in the hospital field will feel at home, but also doctors, nurses, yes even people from the university environment, for everything can be verified by means of more than a hundred pages of references. The language is matter of factly, as those facts speak for themselves. The author is right to say that transplant medicine with living organs (human or animal) is a passing phase and the profession, after 55 years of practice, has no alternative but to conclude that the wrong path was taken, if only because a transplanted organ is always recognized as foreign to the body with all the complications that this entails, leaving the recipient with a low quality of life and sometimes sighing: "If only I had known, I'd never had started it." And life expectancy after transplantation is very short. The success stories that appear in the newspapers are highly exceptional and not normative, not to mention the fact that people should be allowed to die in a dignified manner.

The debate around organ donation flared up again in the Netherlands. The new law in the Netherlands since July 1st 2020 means that if a person does not establish a preference in the National Donor Register, this automatically implies a 'no objection' registration. Nevertheless, there is room for the partner or family to come to a different decision in consultation with doctors. The Dutch churches, including those of the Reformed denomination, are positive about the achievements of transplant medicine. There are also other voices from church circles, but these are exceptional. It is noteworthy that heavy criticism sometimes comes from the medical profession itself and from leading medical ethicists (professors). It is a sign on the wall that people who are themselves involved in transplants often do not like to make themselves available for an interview. Only 57% of doctors and nurses would allow themselves to be explanted in an emergency (make themselves available as donors). In contrast, based on the jubilant press comments, 85% of the general population would be willing to do so.

This book seeks to bring clarity to this matter of life and death. It is a world first, because never before has a publication appeared in which all facets of organ donation are discussed. And each time this is covered here with very convincing arguments, and it is well substantiated, an unimaginable achievement for which we can thank Ruud van der Ven. This book is worthy of a translation into English. It is an 'evergreen'. It promises to become a classic. I hope that politicians too take note of it and that the law on organ donation will soon be revised, because not all that glitters is gold.

I would be surprised if, after reading this book, anyone is still eager to make themselves available as donors or to make their child available for that purpose after for instance a traffic accident. It is dramatic literature for someone who in the past has seen a loved one or close relative surrender for a so-called removal operation: "If I had known that! But surely the coordinating physician had informed me of all the ins and outs!?" the actual practice is different. A very expensive transplant team was already in place, often flown in on helicopters, and in order to reassure family members and obtain the required consent, incomplete and incorrect information is routinely provided. The white doctor's coat appears to be frayed, and not so little too.

The crux of the matter is that only living organs can be used in order to be transferred into another body. A dead organ is useless. When Christian Barnard performed the first heart transplant in 1967, it was necessary to amend the law because, according to the then prevailing legal terminology, a living person was murdered during the removal operation, giving grounds for persecution. Soon after an artificial definition for death was established: 'brain death', and later 'cardiac arrest' was added, thus reducing the patient into a corpse. The body is then put on a ventilator machine and the heart restarted. However, a dead body cannot be ventilated because it would only be inflated (you don't need a university degree to understand that). Says Van der Ven:

> «« Only with the traditional millennia-old criteria consistent with common sense, can we determine death – that is the complete collapse of all vital signs. It follows that a DCD donor (Donation after Circulatory Death) cannot be declared dead, for after the 5-minutes 'no touch time' such a person is still resuscitable. Life is still in him, and so is his soul. He can still be resuscitated although we perceive little of that. He has yet to die, and he does so during the removal operation [a killing]. »» (p. 107)

As far as the brain death criterion is concerned, our knowledge in this regard has improved tremendously since 1967. As it turns out, brain death is not death at all, but a life-threatening neurological condition. A person can be officially brain dead but still

maintain contact with the outside world. He wants to shout: “Here I am!”, but cannot. He is in ‘hibernation’, usually initiated by a reduced blood supply. The body is a totality and the persona is more than just the brain. The soul is the bearer of the persona and it is through the soul that a person functions, thinks and sees. How often does it happen that during an operation under full anesthesia a person perceives what is said and done, down to the smallest details!

In principle, as practice shows, in many cases the diagnosis of brain death is reversible and the body can be resuscitated thanks to targeted treatment including hormones and mild hypothermia of the body. But these are forbidden according to current protocols, because it reduces donor potential. Failure to respond to impulses is not evidence of irreparable damage. Even if the brain can no longer be aroused to consciousness as with Mia Versluis (an exceptional case due to the long duration of the coma: 1966-1971), the brain together with the brain stem still participate in vital body functions, and pain experiences are part of the normal spectrum of possibilities. A person pronounced dead, in our current routine, can suffer tremendously during the removal operation. This is so obvious that it gives many nurses on duty terrible nightmares. If the brain is really dead, biological death follows almost immediately, as in decapitation, but then the body is unfit as an organ donor. If there are additional symptoms of wide, slightly rigid and deformable pupils, corpse stiffness, lividity and decomposition, then there is no longer any doubt, and everyone knows that the body is dead. Someone standing there sees ‘the breaking of the eyes’, the light disappears from one’s eyes, life flows away. The body is cold and motionless. That is the final stage. Dying is a process. It takes time, and that process is not yet well mapped out. For example, it appears possible for a person to have been under ice for more than an hour and yet recover completely without any brain damage. Amazing! This is why the distinction between clinical death and biological death exists. It is indeed a matter of life and death!

Postscript: Since 2024, reports of so-called near death experiences (NDEs) regularly appear on YouTube in which, during such incidents, a conversation with Jesus Christ is held in the afterlife regarding current and future social events, and the person is given theological clarifications. The person in question ‘returns’ after being clinically dead, usually for more than 5 minutes, and in one case known to me even for more than 13 minutes, without suffering brain damage, which to medical standards is impossible.

PART 2 – Ch.2

The Jewish Festive Calender of Redeeming Grace!

Mandelbrot fractal

God's programming of the ages is called dispensationalism, a term based on the English translation of the Greek 'oikonomia', which indicates distinct stages. In the story of the unjust steward, that same word is usually translated with stewardship. Oikonomia is derived from 'oikos' (house) plus the verb 'nemein' (to distribute, manage).[52] ***Oikonomia is the economy of grace, to be understood as the organization and allocation of God's means of grace and the time-bound manner of God's action. Each person has received a portion of grace for the position in which God likes to see him, of which God says: "My grace is sufficient for you." (2 Cor. 12:9) That too is dispensation. The dispensation in our discussion spans the 'centuries'. In its programming for God's purpose it also relates to the nations, especially Israel, in whom all the families of the world will be blessed, and that election is irrevocable. That is our subject, here focused on the Millennial Reign of Peace as known from the Book of Revelation. When one unit of time changes to another, some attributes will be retained, some will disappear and new ones will be added. The capital of the knowledge of faith, built up in the past stages, is only cumulative. Should be, for through negligence knowledge was lost that is now ready to be cleared of dust.***

19 – The Unfinished One

It is implicitly assumed that the Bible describes universal history. In Isaiah 46:10 it says: *"[I am God] declaring the end from the beginning".* Which end? There is no end of all things or the end of all ages of ages. God undoubtedly has in mind all ages of the ages, but that does not mean that He immediately proclaims this in detail. Because that

52) Ephesians 1:10 states: "That in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things." In Ephesians 3:2: "You have heard about the dispensation of God's grace that was given to me." In Colossians 1:25: "...according to the stewardship from God which was given to me." In Ephesians 1:10, instead of dispensation, the word 'stage' can be used, and in verse 3:2 'administration'.

is insufficiently understood, people have come to see the judgment from the Book of Revelation as the last one and the destruction as literal and total. But that is not so obvious and may well be a point of discussion. The Talmud teaches that the Bible only deals with the 'seventh day', the day of making (Olam Assia), in which God transferred the task of completing the work of creation to Man (Adam means man). Remember that Jesus is also human and from that quality was co-creative (in the meaning of assia), which is in line with God's covenant with Adam. Of course, Jesus the Anointed One is God and it is because of this that his work of completion was perfect, without blemish.

Dispensationalism often uses a division into seven periods, supported by various Biblical references. Indeed, the number seven occurs frequently in the Bible. Check your concordance. The most important point of reference is found in the creation account, in which the seventh day of creation, is a kind of 'Unfinished One'. The Genesis 2:3 original text reads: "[In the previous 6 days] God created in order to be able to make [during the 7th still in progress]." This special day is still going towards its final destination. The end of it announces the beginning of the 8th day. This can be compared to the harmonic octave. The eighth note is the first of a new octave. About the yet-to-be octave in God's plan with the world, the Bible says virtually nothing.

The seventh-day Sabbath is reminiscent of the world to come in which, in a new dispensation, God's people will lie in green pastures by the waters of rest (menuhot). (Ps. 23: 1) Menuha is the basic theme of the Sabbath, which proceeds from an intrinsically positive demand from which joy, peace and perfection spring, in short: holiness. The perfected world belongs to the world to come, *"for humanity has not yet entered its rest and does not rest from his works as God did from his. (...) If the people of God had already been able to rest in the Promised Land, God would not have spoken later of another day."* (paraphrase of Hebr. 4:10, 4:8)

The Bible shows that God divides history into periods. In fact, He defines time in terms of hours, months, years. It is therefore not illogical that God carries out his plan for the world in phases that each time come to an end, such as, *"...the hour to reap has come."* (Rev. 14:15) How God arranges these phases is something that theologians cannot agree on, which does not mean that the principle itself is wrong. Here the saying goes: "So many heads, so many opinions", while there can be only one explanation, the one intended by God, whereby it is quite possible that different schemes overlap each other; there is for instance a division in three: the time of the law, the time of grace, and that of the Heavenly Kingdom. Essential to the schemes of dispensationalism, and thus also for our article, is the Reign of Peace of a thousand years (the Millennium), which raises the question of whether Jesus comes before or after the Reign of Peace. There are pre- and postmillennialists. And even amillennialists, mostly Roman Catholic, who assume that the Biblical Reign of Peace should only be seen on a symbolic plane, representing the time in which we now live. I call that intellectual acrobatics. Where is the peace? Peace in this sublunary world leads a poor life.

Strangely enough, all agree on the 'final' judgment, although the Bible nowhere speaks of the latter. And the elements that melt with fervent heat, you might put forward, mentioned in the Peter Letter? Notably in 2 Peter 3:10-13: *"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. (...) [That day] the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new Heavens and a new Earth in which righteousness dwells."* Why do 'elements'

necessarily have to be a material world? The Greek word in Peter's letter for elements is 'stoicheion'. Stoicheion indicates 'an ordered system' or 'coherence' but also a 'principle', even 'spiritual principle'. The verb form (stoicheo) in early colloquialism meant something like 'to be in line'. Stoicheion has several derived meanings such as 'the length of a shadow of the sundial' and 'the main constituents of the cosmos', but those are not applicable here. There is therefore good reason to distinguish an intangible component in 'elements' as well. To conclude on these verses that the day, Peter is speaking of, equates to the final end of the earth is incorrect. As outlined in another article, called "The Time of God's Active Involvement", 'the day of the Lord' refers to the time that precedes the Reign of Peace and this does not precede the final Biblical judgment, as described in Revelation 20:11-12: *"The Earth and the heaven fled away from His face. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God (...) and the dead were judged according to their works."*

What is the foundation of our existence? The spiritual. So why not understand the saying of Peter's letter as the restoration of the paradisiacal state? The earth will be turned upside down but will not be destroyed! Only the elementary basis of the inclination to evil will perish or cease to exist. Before the Reign of Peace starts, the evil inclination, in Hebrew Jetser ha-Ra, must first be annihilated. The spiritual, our psyche, in which the Jetzer ha-Ra resides, represents the elements. Job 26:7 says: *"God hangs the world on the intangible (b'lee mah)."* Since the invisible is the basis of the visible, the known elementary particles, atoms and the like, are actually not truly elementary. After the inner reformation, actually a transfiguration, we look forward to a continuation of life, a better life, for God loves the world and seeks its preservation. (John 3:1)

Noah must have known the creation account

Noah must have known the creation account as written by Moses. In popular traditions, creation stories were passed on orally from generation to generation. For example, it is assumed that the Illyas and Odyssey by Homer have been recorded after a centuries long chain of troebadoers. So they were not invented by him. And mind you, there are too many elements in these stories that deviate from the typical Greek culture. The 'discovery' of Troy in 1873 by Heinrich Schliemann is therefore a joke, as is Agamemnon's mask. Troy never existed because Troy is the city of every war! The Battle of Stalingrad was also Troy. There may be a Troy-like scenario that served as a model, but certainly not Schliemann's Troy. It is therefore very plausible that the Biblical creation account was known before Moses recorded it. The story was known, but it has been written down with God's own words.

20 – God's Cycle under the Magnifying Glass

After Israel became God's special partner in the work of creation, God instituted the Sabbath. Abraham Joshua Heschel, a leading Jewish theologian of the last century, explained that the creation story has received this form to fulfill the Sabbath ideal. Noah and his ancestors must have known its schematic layout. Yet they will not have kept a Sabbath in the manner known to us.

The creation account tells that when the highest beings - Adam and Eve - were called into existence and the creation initiative was done, that from then on the Creator was allowed to keep his own Sabbath. Then also the human work began to steer history towards the goal set by God. In Genesis 2:2 is written: *"...and God ended his work,*

which He had done, and rested on the seventh day." However, the work of creation did not end. It was transferred from God to man and sealed by a covenant at Mount Horeb. I wish to emphasize that the Sabbath ordinance, revealed at the Horeb, was completely new and was not common in Israel and the surrounding cultures of the time, and so it may be considered a precious gift to humanity, a foretaste of something greater, He who instituted this ordinance not for Himself but for us. (Mk. 2:27) At the time of Horeb, Israel's festive cycle was also instituted. On closer inspection, the regular work week represents a mini-festive cycle in analogy to the seven-day creational process that irresistibly heads toward the eighth day.

A key to the duration of the human labor in the divinely determined seventh day of creation is found in the chapter where it says that the elements will melt with fervent heat: *"With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."* (2 Peter 3:8) Yes, but since Adam, forerunner of the seventh day of creation, thousands of years have passed and not 1x thousand. Yet there is a way out. We recognize here a fractal set (see Wikipedia under Mandelbrot). In such a set, any part has the same pattern, only on a smaller scale, something that is common in natural manifestations such as in the branches of a tree. The first impression is different, but a closer look reveals that the structure of the small is the same as the large. There is a Biblical feast that points to this: the Jubilee of Leviticus 25, the eighth great feast. There is a thorough study on this topic by John Sietze Bergsma.[53)] I was happy with that, because there is hardly any literature about it. He shows that the practical application of the feast has gradually faded into the background in favor of an end-time theology.[54)]

As is known, there is a Jubilee celebration every 50th year, following 7 x 7 years. Then all people will be restored to their rights, debts forgiven and slaves freed. A nice ideal, but already at an early stage in Israel's existence that feast fell into disuse because the demands turned out to be too harsh for an urbanized and sedentary society. No sources indicate that the Jubilee was ever put into practice obeying all the provisions of the Book Leviticus. It is therefore pure assumption that early in Israel's existence this feast was respected. In fact, there are indications that this was never the case. Bergsma points to a Jewish source (Bab. Ned. 61a) on page 151 that the Jubilee was counted at 49 years after the beginning of the Exodus and 50 before (the Jubilee provisions were not entirely new). Because the 50th year was not correctly celebrated, it was skipped in the counting. The 49th applied to temple dedications (if appropriate).[55)] This explains why the Prophet Daniel fits the coming of Christ the King (the messiah prince) into a frame of seven sevens (for the rebuilding and dedication of the Temple), and 490 years: 49 +

53) "The Jubilee from Leviticus to Qumran (a history of intepretation)" by John Sietze Bergsma - Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden◇Boston # 2007.

54) Ezekiel 46:7 indicates familiarity with the workings of the Jubilee in this historical period. His vision of the restored temple, in analogy with the restoration of the paradisiacal state (Ezekiel 40-44 especially 43:1-7), begins in the first verse (40:1) with a reference to half a Jubilee year.

434 plus one seven (7+62+1). (Dan. 9:24-26) The underlying symbolism is not difficult to decipher, although it is usually not realized that the very last temple consecration will be that of our body, not of a few devout Christians but the apotheosis of all humankind, the by then wholly sanctified humanity. Contrary to the foregoing, the passage discussing the dedication of Solomon's Palace and the Temple underscores that in the first period of Israel's national existence the Jubilee was respected, which occurred exactly 500 years after the beginning of the Exodus, as an attentive reading of 1 Kings Ch. 6 to 8 seems to indicate. Bergsma concludes his studies with:

> «« In Second Temple Judaism [therefore after the Babylonian exile] (…) the association of the Jubilee [Year] with liberation is not lost, but eschatologized. The liberation that the Jubilee represents becomes identified almost exclusively with the dawning of the Eschaton [the Millennium]. Even at Qumran (…) there is little or no evidence that the Jubilee Year was observed legally and economically, even if the Jubilee cycles were calculated.[56] Increasingly, in the Second Temple period, the arrival of the eschatological Jubilee is associated with the coming of a messianic figure (…) Finally, a shift occurs in Second Temple literature concerning the type of debt the Jubilee addresses. While the original legislation was clearly concerned with monetary debt, the later texts apply the Jubilee to moral-spiritual debt, namely sin. (…) These general observations may be of assistance in evaluating the significance of jubilary allusions or motifs in the New Testament. »»

There is a point of criticism here. Since the Jubilee begins after 7 x 7 years have elapsed, the Jubilee can never be identical to the Eschaton, as ancient Judaism thought, but symbolizes what follows. The fiftieth (7x7 plus 1) is therefore equal to the eighth (7 plus 1). And the number eight points to the eighth day of creation. Paradoxically, this indicates that the Jubilee is the most important celebration. To be in disuse now is transient. In our dispensation it forms the picture frame for all other religious festivities, the finishing touch. Perhaps the other festivities (those of the current church year) will one day become the picture frame for the Jubilee… I do not want to withhold from you a quote from Isaac Da Costa, a famous Jew converted to Christianity, discussing the seventh day of creation:

> «« The sanctification of the first day of the week was typically foreshadowed by the day on which a little servant from Israel was to be circumcised. That was on the 'eighth' day after his birth. Why the eighth day? Because the first week, the first seven days, represent natural life; but with the first day something new begins that does not belong to the first, but to the second creation - the new Man. Circumcision sets him apart, sanctifies him before God. What that sign of the new birth doesn't imply! The shedding of blood points to justification: the cutting off and throwing away of something that can be missed, to putting off and putting away the old human [flesh], in short sanctification. »»

You can object that nothing can surpass Jesus' Easter Sacrifice and that, therefore, Passover can never be the picture frame for what should become the Jubilee. But what was 'the' Sacrifice for? To return Man to his original state. The Sacrifice was not only

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55) Here Bergsma refers to "Sabbatical, Jubilee, and the Temple of Solomon" by Lee W. Casperson - Brill # 2003 (pp. 283-96).

56) The Qumran texts (at the Dead Sea) don't reflect the views of a small community having lived in Qumran. They refer to various groups or communities scattered all over Palestine and elsewhere in the Greco-Roman world, as the internal evidence proves, for the texts reveal a range of beliefs that must have belonged to a large number of Jewish communities. It was not until much later that, under the influence of the Talmud and a strict education, a uniformity of thought and action emerged.

made for reconciliation but also for renewal. (Col. 3:10) That is the crux of the Jubilee: everyone's restoration to his original and glorified state; you may say: paradisiacal state. What is worth more: the payment or the item purchased? Always the item, which is the new human being, because otherwise the sum would not have been paid. Indeed, God so much loves the world, loves all of us, each of us!

Romans 8 speaks of the sharing of the children of God in the glorification of Christ's body and not only that: the creation too will be redeemed from the bondage of corruption and have its share. Johan Stringer knows how to interpret that well in his well written Dutch book "Discover your Heritage" (Ontdek je Erfdeel # 2009 - p. 84):

> «« As Paul presented it thus far [in the letter to the Romans], our inheritance [in Christ] has everything to do with a restoration of creation, including the earth. The freedom and glory - or inheritance - of the adopted sons of God is manifested first of all in a renewal of creation. The *"sons of God"* are delivered from death and destruction in this creation. This does not mean that they are torn away from creation and leave creation behind, or that creation is 'dissolved'. No, creation itself participates in this renewal. Since the fall, the creation itself has been waiting for the day that the sons of God will receive their inheritance, for on that day the creation itself will also be jubilant and radiantly renewed from the iron grip of [pernicious] death. All creation is like a woman groaning and giving birth, who nevertheless endures her suffering full of hope: she expects new life. We sigh along in that travail. When our glory is revealed, creation will share in this glorious reality without submission to corruption. Thus, we will celebrate our inheritance with and in a creation that will share the same glory with us, yes, in the same material creation that we know now, but greatly renewed. By material I mean 'material', 'tangible', made up of atoms and molecules. »»

21 – Shall a Nation be Born at Once?

Having determined that the seventh day of creation, when examined, is again a self-contained weekly cycle of seven dispensations (a so-called fractal), let's dive into the details. We're going to strengthen the magnifying glass. And guess what? Each creation day is typified 'in the beginning' by the birth of a characteristic figure: creation day 1 – Let there be light; day 2 – firmament; day 3 – dry land; day 4 – heavenly lights; day 5 – floating souls; day 6 – earthbound souls; day 7 – sanctifying blessing. That last day does not come to an end until its sanctification is completed. That day is in the present tense, for we are living in it. Since one day for God equals a thousand years, the seven dispensations within day 7 are seven millennia. In the unfolding millennia, we recognize the same theme in the advent of characteristic persons. However, they are more than signposts and have a shared creative responsibility with God. In the act of blessing God will continue to bless, provided his partner, man, is open to it. It follows that God's seventh day rest is not inactivity (inactivity versus bara), but an activity differently. God's involvement never ends (Ps. 121:4), is even essential.

Genesis 2:4 begins with.: *"These are the births of heavens and the earth when they were created."* The distinctive figures of the seven millennia are therefore births and not events. The first Reign of the seventh creative day begins with Adam dying in 930 AM (Anno Mundi).[57)] The second with Noah's birth in 1056 AM; he dies in 2006 AM. The third millennium begins with the birth of Abraham in 2008 AM; he 'only' gets to be 175 years old. The fourth begins with David at 2944 AM; he dies in 3013 AM. Its meaning is evident. The fifth starts with the birth of our Lord and Savior in 3997 AM

or 8 BC; He dies in 26 AD.[58] The sixth millennium begins in the then Christianized Europe, where there were great expectations on the threshold of the new millennium, but also fear. If one man deserves the nomination, it is Emperor Otto III, called the mirabilia mundi (the wonder of the world). Born in 4985 AM, he dies at the age of 21 in the year of our Lord 1002 AD. He died without the hoped-for Reign of Peace having begun or the prerequisites for it having been created. His mission miserably failed, not by his own doing, as with Adam, but because the people did not want to follow him. This does not detract from his special calling and place in history. The pair of Otto and Pope Sylvester symbolize the coming Reign of Peace, of which the unified cooperation between the secular and spiritual authorities is the special feature. It is still too early to make a definitive judgment on Otto's unique significance, for the past 6th millennium has not yet been properly mapped out with regard to its spiritual aspect.

Sukkoth at de Kotel (Tempel Wall in Jerusalem)

For the seventh millennium, the crucial question arises: who is the figure for that? This millennium started chronologically with the Twin Towers debacle in New York. It has not yet arrived to the fulfillment of its joyful promises. Not yet. Will that figure be the

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57) The chronology used is that of Ivan Panin (1855-1942), an American of Russian descent who was able to make a continuous Biblical chronology thanks to a number of chronological keys offered in the New Testament.

58) Jesus was working in contrary to Adam in everything. It has been suggested (the source eluded me) that Adam was 33 years old when he fell in disgrace, and that would explain why Jesus' atoning sacrifice was in his 33rd year. Genesis 5:5 says: "And all the days that Adam lived were 930 years." For the eight other patriarchs in that chapter the word 'lived' is missing. Yours truly explains this 'lived' as Adam 'living on earth after the fall', which means that Adam in fact lived to be older than 930 (actually 930 + 33). Actually, the Anno Mundi calendar starts immediately after Adam and Eve's exile from Paradise.

Jesus was born in 8 BC when the great census was taken and so He was crucified on 26 AD. Consequently, a lot of dates shifted with regard to the conventional chronology. Because of this, John the Baptist's mission lasted not several months but three and a half years to give him sufficient opportunity to pave Jesus' public mission. The underlying evidence can be found in "Proofs of the Life and Death of Jesus", written by yours truly.

Prince of Peace known as Shiloh, the one sent? (Gen. 49:10) According to an established prophetic tradition within the Roman Church, this Prince of Peace, referred to as the Great Monarch, will not be Jesus Messiah, but an ordinary man who will be covered by Jesus with a special grace, who from that moment on has little to do with the person he once was.[59] This covering would be so complete that this figure flows over prophetically into the Messiah; they can hardly be distinguished from each other! The truthfulness of this prediction may be subject to different opinions. In my view there exists an even more important candidate for the Millennium, not a person but a nation. You have guessed it right: the State of ISRAEL, date of birth Dec. 9, 1917, which is the day when General Edmond Allenby captured Jerusalem without a need to fight for it.[60] Does not Isaiah 66:7-8 says: *"Before she was in labor, she gave birth; Before her pain came, she delivered a male child. (...) Shall a nation be 'born' at once?"* Sure enough! And in the next verse (cf. Vulgate): *"Shall I, God, who lets others have children, don't have children Myself? Shall I, who give offspring to others, remain sterile Myself?"* After this list of exceptional births, the question arises: who will be the eighth day figure that emerges after the final stage? In the same vein it will not be a person, not even a nation, but all nations. It will be the whole world in the apotheosis of the inner state!

22 – The Meaning of the Calendars of Israel

The liturgical calendar of Israel is based on the harvest cycle, with a symbolic interpretation for each event. The harvest season spans seven months with festivities running from Nissan 15 to Tishrei 22. The Passover Festival (Easter) is in the month of Nissan and celebrates the liberation from Egyptian slavery and the birth of Israel as a nation, even more so it celebrates God's chosen people among the nations. On the second day of Passover, the freshly harvested barley is offered. Various harvests continue throughout the season, with finally the wine harvest during Sukkoth (Feast of Tabernacles), which falls in the seventh month, the month Tishrei, the Sabbath-month of the year. Sukkoth is to the other festivals what the sabbath is to the other six days of the week. This completes the harvest cycle, and a number of cropless months follow before the new cycle starts. One interpretation of this arrangement is that the harvest cycle points to the old world with its sweat and tears and weakness of the flesh. Sukkoth, as a final festival, is thus the end of the old dispensation and at the same time a fitting foreshadowing of the coming age when each and everyone will live in peace and brotherhood under the reign of the Great Monarch. Sukkoth is in Jewish practice the pre-eminent borderline festival. It is the Great Festival, the culmination and object of all the appointed times. Just as the weekly sabbath is a foretaste of the Millennium Reign, this happens to be the case with Sukkoth.

The other cycle that merits our attention starts at the Jewish New Year, known as Rosh Ha-shana, on Tishrei 1. I like to call this new cycle, the cycle of the new world. It is

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59) See: "Demain...?, d'après les Concordances frappantes de 132 Prophéties anciennes et modernes" (Tomorrow... ?, based on the striking similarities of 132 ancient and modern prophecies), by Baron de Novaye - Ed. Lethielleux, Paris # 1934. This does not mean that such prophecies are taken seriously in the Catholic Church. Actually, they are at a loss what to do with them, even if those who uttered them enjoy a certain authority.

60) Usually, the proclamation of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, is seen as the birth of the State of Israel, which was later ratified by the United Nations, but the Bible indicates differently. After all, Isaiah says that before she went into labor she had to give birth. Political independence has been accompanied by much struggle; the shaking off of the Turkish/Ottoman yoke has been easy. That is why I choose Dec. 9, 1917 as the date of its birth.

important to note that in the month of Tishrei, the seventh month of the old world overlaps with the first month of the new world. Thus an intermezzo arises, a kind of interregnum, which does not yet know the perfection of the new world, but is already much more perfect than the previouw periods. In this we recognize the Millennial Reign of Peace. This overlap explains why the annual reading cycle begins immediately after Sukkoth - on Tishrei 23 - and not on Rosh Ha-shana (1 Tishrei), as would seem more logical. This particular day, the Simkhat Torah, is amongst the most joyous of the Jewish calendar.[61)] The annual reading cycle starts, as can be expected, at Brei' sheet, as the Jews call Genesis, but the youngest day, when humankind will have been set free definitely, starts at a different scroll not yet written. Sukkoth is the seventh and last festival that immediately precedes Simkhat Torah and Sukkoth thus nicely fits the Millennium Age. It is no accident that Sukkoth, whose very name indicates its temporal significance, has an additional attribute – in addition to being a harvest festival: that of commemorating the Exodus from Egypt, which also stands central with Pesach, also on a fifteenth of the month. We eagerly look forward to the great day that this exodus from Egypt will allegorically become an exodus for the whole human race!!

It is typical that New Year's Day, on the first day of Tishrei, is also known as the Day of Judgement. The first and the tenth day of the month of Tishrei developed into official days of repentance and also, in the course of time, became known in the synagogue as the Yamim Nora'im, the frightful-fearful days with, in between, an intermezzo of peace. In the pre-exilic time, New Year's Day was on the equinox of Tishrei 10, when day and night are of equal length. After the exile, however, a backward adjustment was made to Thisrei 1 with an eight-day gap in between, which marks the interregnum, the intermezzo of peace. On these issues, see "Proofs of the Life and Death of Jesus" under "The Sun Miracle", which is available on the Internet.

Strikingly, after just seventy years of exile the festive cycle of Israel has been shuffeled, also with regard to the liturgical significance of certain feasts. The cheerfully tinted Feast of Tabernacles was placed after the Rite of Azazel (scapegoat), when in former times it used to stand before it. And Yom Kippur replaced the Rite of Azazel. Originally, New Year's Day was observed for the inauguration of Temples and immediately followed Sukkoth, as it was still observed under Ezra and Nehemiah. It later merged with the day named in Lev. 23:24 and Num. 29:1, known in the Bible as Yom Teruah, which means 'the day of the blowing' (of the Shofar trumpet). Teruah was a simple ceremony that may have marked the difference between the lunar and solar year, the one being about eleven days shorter than the other. The changes in the liturgical calendar were many and evolved over an extended period. How exactly and why these changes were introduced is still insufficiently understood. Formerly, Israel had followed a solar year in which both equinoxes, at Eastern and Tabernacles, played the essential part. After the Babylonian exile the Jewish nation gradually adopted the nineteen-year lunar-solar Babylonian cycle.

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61) A cycle that has often shown its ugly face accounts for the saddest day in Jewish history. That is the 9th of the month of Ab (July-August), date of destruction of the first Temple (559 BC) and the second one (70 AD) and date of the expulsions from England (1290) and Spain (1492), and also the day in 1942 that the Treblinka gas chambers were started, that marked the beginning of the Holocaust (the Nazis may have chosen this date deliberately). The Talmud says that the 9th of Ab is cursed because on that day the spies returned from the Promised Land bringing desperate tidings (Num. 13 and 14). Here too, on the Simkhat Torah, according to the prophecy of Zechariah 8:19, the day of mourning will have turned into joy.

Despite the deviations from the original calendar, yours truly assumes that these are directed by God and have a prophetic character. An attempt to give substance to this leads to the following conclusions. The Exodus, to which Sukkoth refers, lasted for forty years. Sukkoth (booth) indicates temporality in its name. Sukkoth has an additional feature: in addition to being a harvest festival, it commemorates the Exodus from Egypt, when Israel's enemy was given a taste of its own medicine. A similar situation evolved at the end of the Exodus, known as Baal Peor. (Num. 25) Israel then had to fight against Midian. That was the episode with the great Magician Balaam who tried to, but failed to curse Israel.

At an early stage the messianic kingdom was already seen by the ancient Israelites as the reign of a thousand years. According to MDM's prophecy of May 28, 2012, this should be taken literally: *"Know that the 1000 years referred to in the Book of Revelation means just that."* By the seventh day, the self-repeating degenerative cycle will not be broken yet, except for those who went through the great tribulation. Revelation 20:6 reads: *"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."* The Saints, who will rule with the Twelve Apostles, will from the very beginning have been exalted in the paradisiacal state.

According to prophecies from various sources, like those from Marie-Julie Jahenny, Sœur Nativitas, Abbé Voclin, Josef Stockert and those from the children of La Salette, the definite and total turn-around will only take place 'after' the 7th day in what is the restoration of the paradisiacal state, which then applies to all. The prophecy of La Salette of September 19th 1846 goes as follows: *"This peace among people will be short-lived: 25 years of plentiful harvests [25 is not to be taken litteraly] will make them forget that the sins of men are the cause of all the suffering that appears on the earth."* As well as Marie-Julie Jahenny (Jan. 27th 1881): *"When the king of kings dies, i.e., the earthly king [and thus the Great Monarch], who will have sown the seeds of that beautiful peace, that peace will disappear again, to erupt once more in a bloody crisis, then…"*

When things turn sour at the end of the 7th day, as those prophecies foresee, a most terrible seducer will enter the scene, but his reign is to be short-lived. At that time another great apostasy will occur, because Satan is given permission to deceive the nations. He then drags along those who have feigned submission and are probably jealous of the immortality of the saints who, in their perspective, would not have wanted to share the elixir of life with the others. Then the rebels will encircle the camp of the saints, Jerusalem, the beloved city: *"But fire fell from heaven and consumed them."* And then comes the Last Judgment. (Rev. 20:7-15)

Finally, I would like to mention JNSR's message of Sept. 18th 2009 in which Jesus says that, as with God's people then, He will open the Red Sea to lead each one to the Promised Land, here referred to as the "Civilization of Love". Jesus continues: *"After a concerted effort, the Kingdom of God on Earth will be ready to begin."* Because I assume that the 'Civilization of Love' equates the Millennial Reign of Peace, and that the Last Judgment is a messenger of yet another new era, I feel free to conclude that a 'Kingdom of God on Earth' will follow the Last Judgment. The battle here on earth will then be fought forever. After all, Lucifer and his cronies, being the ultimate instigators of evil, will then have been definitely plunged into the abyss after mankind, like silver, has been purified seven times in the seething crucible. (Ps. 12:6) All the slag had to come out and that took time, seven thousand years. Afterwards, there is no need anymore for a general judgment.

PART 2 – Ch.3

'Otton III was more than Emperor'

Based on:

ANNO DOMINI 1000 - ANNO DOMINI 2000

The Thousand Years at the Grace of the Dead GOD
And the Secret of World History

This treatise is an anthology from the first chapter of Dr. Frank de Graaff's book, written in Dutch: "Anno Domini 1000 - Anno Domini 20000" (Publisher J.H. Kok - Kampen # 1977), and can be considered as a supplement to the preceding article: "The Jewish Festive Calendar of Redeeming Grace".

Emperor Otto III can be considered a figure of the one who is to come, referred to in Old Testament tradition as Shiloh (the sent one), the coming prince of peace, who is eagerly anticipated. After Adam, each time someone of great historical importance was born on the threshold of a new millennium, and so it must be around the year 1000 AD. The second millennium since Adam begins with the birth of Noah, the third of Abraham, the fourth of David and the fifth with the birth of Jesus. Finally, the sixth millennium with that of Otto III, who was born in the year 980 of our era.

Emperor Otton III, whose life and era cannot be understood with the usual historical rhetoric, was attributed the epithet of Mirabilia Mundi or "miracle of the world". This ruler represents the perfect image of the king of kings, foretold in the Bible, the sovereign ruler of God's nation on earth, who will govern the world in close political and ecclesiastical agreement, in a way no one has seen before. The opening words of one of Otto's documents are quite revealing: "Otton, slave of the Apostles and according to the will of the Lord Saviour, august emperor of the Romans. We proclaim Rome capital of the world. We recognise that the Latin Church is the mother of all churches." [62] ***But it was of no avail. Not yet! His aspirations were still premature, but that does not mean that they were devoid of realism. In certain ways, Norman Cantor says, we may consider the Ottonian period a microcosm of the later vicissitudes of our Western civilization. Frank de Graaff comments (p. 16): "Never before a child has been brought into this world in whom the Christian culture was more invested. At a time when people awaited God's final judgment and the fearsome destruction of our Christian civilization, but also seriously tried to prevent such a thing, Otton III is born, like a divine disposition and last opportunity to save the Christian body."***

What follows is from "Anno Domini 1000 - Anno Domini 2000", except for what is in-between brackets. Additions by Hubert Luns. (quotes pp. 62-63, 66-67, 69-71, 78)

23 – The Prelude

[In 961, after his victories, the monarch Otto I descends to Italy to receive the imperial crown.] [The persona[63)] of] the emperorship [of East and West], restored in him, makes a vigorous effort to renew the unity of ecumenism. Otto is largely restoring Charlemagne's empire. (…) The papacy is liberated. (…) Islam is beaten back. All this is connected with the great spiritual reformation of Cluny, which aimed to restore the bond between heaven and earth. Otto I is actually the head of this reformation. His efforts to forge the unity of Christian civilization are driven by a spiritual principle. (…) The sinful conflicts [in Christian civilization] must be dissolved. Justice, righteousness, and mercy must reign throughout ecumenism. Otto has tirelessly tried to achieve all of this. He was an exalted, impressive genius. The last thing that stood in the way of the unity of Christendom was the pretense of Byzantium. The East Romans did not recognize Otto's Emperorship. The Hellenistic gods (celestial princes or angel princes) wanted to displace the immediate influence of the god (or prince of heaven) from ecumenism. (…) [With great difficulty the emperor managed to arrange a marriage between his son and the Byzantine princess Theophano, that was concluded in 972.] That fulfilled the aim of Otto I's pursuit and allowed him to witness the basis for the renewed unity of ecumenism. In that with great difficulty arranged marriage, shines the apotheosis of the reign of Otto I. A year later he died in Quedlinburg The genius Otto II follows the calling of his father. The life of Emperor Otto II perfectly shows that the god of ecumenism also acts in him. The Emperor knows how to subdue the revolts in which the old powers want to regain their independence. (…) Impressively, the god in the Emperor imposes his authority on the powers that oppose the unity of ecumenism. However, the Hellenistic gods resisted more than ever. They try to remove Byzantium from the immediate authority of the god. They do this in a way that has had major consequences for the Eastern Roman Empire, yes, which ultimately led to the downfall of Byzantium. Their rebellion against the god of ecumenism drives them into an alliance with Islam, led by a newly emerged 'prince', the guardian angel of Arabia. From this act it appears that Hellenism predominated Byzantium more than Christianity. The course of history demonstrates what a fatal act was perpetrated. Byzantium has betrayed ecumenism. It refused to accept the god of ecumenism other than indirectly. To obstruct its immediate regime, Byzantium allies itself in a monster alliance with Islam. This has [over time] the consequence that Byzantium loses territory after territory to Islam…

(…) Despite her victories, despite a true spiritual recovery being revealed, the reformation of Otto I and Otto II was not strong enough to avert impending judgment. The god of the West, the guardian angel of Christian civilization, had heeded the admonition of Israel's God: *"Defend the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy; deliver the poor and needy, free them from the hand of the wicked."* In both emperors, the god had truly endeavored to obey this command. However, the hardening of Christendom had become so great that conversion failed to materialize. Despite the mighty and resplendent restoration of the Ottonian Reformation, in which the god of

62) "The Civilization of the Middle Ages" by Norman F. Cantor, Harper Collins Publ. - New York # 1993 (completely revised and expanded). Previous editions of this book were entitled: "Medieval History: The Life and Death of a Civilization" # 1974 (revised), 1968 (revised), 1963. Quote p. 216.

63) A persona is the aspect of a someone's character or nature that is presented to the outside world, perhaps very different from his real character or true nature.

the West sought to save his culture, Christendom itself did not convert. Rome, Germania, Byzantium try to destroy the unity of ecumenism by throwing off the rule of the god of ecumenism. The amazing happened. The god is converted, but his culture does not imitate him in this. [In that sense, one could speak of a failed mission, just as with Adam, although with him there was not yet a people and a culture. Adam's failure had profound consequences for the further course of history, as did Otto's failure and his son's afterwards; the disastrous developments in the second Christian millennium cannot be separated from this.]

24 – Something Divine Reveals itself

(…) From the marriage of Otto II, the Emperor of the West and Theophano, the daughter of the Eastern Roman Emperor Romanus II, a son was born in 980, to become Otto III, who by birth already represents the unity of all Christendom. (…) [It can be rightly said that] Otto III was the incarnate body of the Christian culture. Otto I and Otto II were instruments of the god. Was Otto III more than an instrument? (…) The facts from Otto III's life give rise to that assumption. It is obvious that he has been taken over by the god. His high moral life, his brilliant deeds at a very young age, his high sense of vocation, his isolation in life, all point in this direction. (…) Pope Silvester II touched this secret by seeing something divine in young Otto: *"Something divine becomes manifest, I do not know what, if someone – by birth Greek and by authority Roman and in that capacity, as it were, by inheritance – takes possession of the treasures of Greek and Roman wisdom."*

(…) [Otto II dies when his son is three years old.] Less than fifteen years old, Otto III himself takes over the government. All his actions are aimed at restoring ecumenism and making the City of God manifest on earth. Then it seems, …that just before the beginning of the year thousand, the City of God will be made manifest on earth. [As a last preparatory act] Otto succeeds in 999 to appoint his beloved teacher Gerbert of Reims as Pope Silvester II [with whom he wants to achieve his goals in close cooperation]. [The choice of the name Sylvester represents a conscious effort to associate with the papacy of Saint Sylvester I (314-325), whose pontificate had long been considered a model of papal and imperial cooperation.[64)]]

More than any of his predecessors, Otto III has drawn closer the moment of the realization of the State of God. His actions have an almost unearthly radiance. While he is only a boy by age, he is leading the entire Empire. Then he is already a great general. His way of life also recalls the otherworldly. He lives in ascetic purity. Though he is gracious and generous to all who are in his nearness, he cannot be among them all the time. At meals, for example, he used to sit alone at a semicircular table that was higher than the table of his guests. He did this not out of vanity, but so that the radiance of his being would not be too intolerable for his surroundings. Not only by his great deeds

64) "Lives of the Popes" by Richard P. McBrien, HarperSanFransisco # 1997. Quote is from Pope nr. 139.

does he want to bring the City of God on earth. As the head of ecumenism, he wants to atone for the injustice of Christendom. Otto practices the utmost asceticism in which he does not shrink from self-flaggalation. It is remarkable that while doing so he never discarded the imperial attributes. With this he expresses that he does not do penance for himself personally, but as Emperor for Christendom, whose head he is, (...) and thus substitutionary expiates the judgment that Christendom should have suffered. (…) It is for this reason that he calls himself [for some time]: *"Slave of Jesus Christ and Emperor Augustus of the Romans, according to the will of God, who is our Saviour and Deliverer."*

(…) The practice of substitutionary atonement belongs to one of the oldest traditions of humankind. However, judgment and punishment are never manifestations of vengeance from the highest God. They are the conditions for recovery and recreation. And that's why they are irrevocable. God, who is Love, does not want to see his creation, which He has created out of love, be destroyed by sin. That is why judgment and punishment are connected with the love of God. The punishment is intended as an act of recreation. Since [humanity is one family and since] the punishment is not retribution but act of recreation, it can also be substitutionally undergone. Concurrently this experience is a mighty act of recreation. There is also something else. The substitution is revelation of love. By the substitutionary atonement, the recreative power of [fraternal] Love might reveal itself.

(…) All these things [and much more] make it more and more plausible that the assumption is correct: Otto III was more than Emperor! The god of the West, the guardian angel of Christendom, incarnated himself in Otto III shortly before the divine sentence of the year 1000. For us late-borns, this assumption is difficult to understand. Accepting the assumption, however, reveals a great deal of what otherwise remains completely inexplicable.

25 – Otto's Death is the Great Turning Point in Time

(…) [By his substitutionary atonement] the god of the West has brought upon himself the death sentence that otherwise had to be executed on his culture. The execution of the death sentence is revealed in history by the sudden death of Emperor Otto III, on the 23rd January of the year 1002. Apparently, the execution of the sentence could no longer be delayed. With the death of Otto III, the unity of ecumenism is forever broken. (…) In general, [his contemporaries] intuitively understood that Otto's death was evidence of a metahistorical event in course of history. The following poem by Leo of Vercelli, a contemporary of Emperor Otto, reveals this clearly. The poem was written immediately after Otto's death. It goes like this:

> ***Let the world mourn, that Rome mourn, that Christianity mourns.***
> ***Let no song be heard in Rome, that the imperial palace shriek!***
> ***The ages are in confusion under the Emperor's absence.***
> ***While our Otto dies, death arises in the world.***
> ***Heaven has changed its face and the earth its appearance.***
> ***The wolves will devour the people, the end of all will be.***
> ***Soon the sky will collapse and the elements will pass away.***

The death of Emperor Otto III is experienced as an event that moves heaven and earth. Since her fate is determined by that death, therefore the whole world must mourn. Rome, the capital of ecumenism, must mourn. Christendom must mourn, for whoever came into the world to save her has died. The song in Rome must therefore stop, the song that once expressed the joy of the expectation of salvation to come. The palace

must shriek, because no emperor will be head of Christendom anymore. In the absence of the Emperor, the centuries will be confused. Otto's death is the great turning point in time. When he dies, death as a general ruler invades Christian culture. Otto's death has cosmic signifycance. Heaven changed its face and the earth its appearance. The wolves will devour the people. Here an image is used taken from the Germanic past. Wolves are, according to mythological tradition, the incarnated demons who break free when the gods die and the world ends.

These statements at the death of an emperor are truly exceptional. When Charlemagne died, even then, such things were not said. The poem again clearly points to the secret of Otto III. Men have intuitively understood that Otto's death meant more than the death of an emperor. People knew intuitively that a metahistorical event took shape in his death. Only when a god dies is the cosmos changed. Now death started to rule in a cultural region. The connection between Heaven and Earth was broken, which caused a change of the face of Heaven and Earth.

Dr. Frank de Graaff (19128-1993) was a Dutch reformed minister in Well & Ammerzoden, Apeldoorn, Rotterdam and Hattem. He wrote eleven books, the best known of which has become "When Gods Die, the Crisis of Western Culture" # 1969.

General Remark: Frank de Graaff repeatedly uses the expression "unity of ecumenism" or "god of ecumenism". He also speaks of "the unity of all Christendom" and of "unity of Christian civilization". There is nothing wrong with those last two concepts. However, I have my doubts about ecumenism. At the very least, this word leads to misunderstandings. Ecumenism means "inhabited world" and used to refer to the Roman Empire. In the 18th century the meaning of rapprochement between the churches was given to this, but it was not until the 20th century that it became a common concept. The pursuit of unity according to Ephesians 4 does not lie there! In the year 1000 there had not yet been a reformation and considerations in this regard did not play a role then. That is why Otto III must not have thought of anything resembling the contemporary ecumenical movement, but he must have aimed for the union of church and state. Instead of the unity of ecumenism, I therefore prefer the term "unity of the Christian Church and World" (a kind of "Urbi et Orbi") as a typology for the Ottonian period, and in other places I prefer the term church-unification instead of ecumenism (as opposed to church division), and for the god of ecumenism the concept "god of the unification of the church, and the entente cordiale" (worldly agreement). I would leave ecumenism in one place because it is undeniably used in the classical sense: *"Justice, righteousness, and mercy must reign throughout ecumenism."*

Review

Discover Your Inheritage!

— Johan Stringer

Ontdek je Erfdeel (Discover Your Inheritage)
Publisher vastvoedsel.nl, Sept. 2009
isbn 978-90-814626-1-7
247 pages, soft cover, Euro 18,50
Available via website of the publisher.

"Discover Your Inheritance" offers a refreshing perspective! It is a surprisingly profound and easy-to-read book that I recommend to everyone. Our God-promised heritage, our inheritance, is much more concrete and 'earthly' colored than people usually realize. Yet how is it possible that this concept, so common in the Bible, means so shockingly little to us? A recalibration was called for. New horizons are opened by Johan Stringer. He is an offshoot of the well known Theological College, then in Veenendaal, and worked for eight years with his wife as a missionary in the interior of Africa. So we are assured of a solid piece of theology

I quote from the introduction (p. 15):

> «« Paul prays in Ephesians 11:15-23 for a special revelation of the Spirit that our spiritual eyes might be opened. So that with these enlightened eyes, full of wonder, we might taste every day again, and feel, and know deeply spiritually, how marvelously rich and glorious God's promise of our inheritance is. That this is the core of our calling, we see from Paul's prayer. So we are not talking about just another interesting topic or some kind of spiritual luxury dessert for later. We are talking about the core of our faith. »»

After discussing at the beginning of the book what inheritance meant for the tribes of nature – which is something quite different from ours, the author draws a comparison with what it meant for the patriarchs within the scope of Canaanite culture. The inheritance promise within the New Testament dispensation is then discussed and its practical interpretation for our life of faith. That is a learning process. Stringer therefore also presents the book as a study book. What emerges? Being co-heir in Christ is not just a slogan, but is of a decisive nature.

At the end of Stringer's book, the gaze turns to the future, which is a speculative but necessary exploration. After all, the appropriation of the promise makes us realize what the battle is about and what the final victory has in the offing, though not yet

purely defined. Receiving the inheritance - listen carefully - leads to the praise of God's glory, and that now is the climax of all God's work for us.

This should be thought of primarily in terms of nations and family property, not individuals. Yes, our deliverance and salvation as individual Christians is certain! We know that. Yet the individual cannot be separated from the larger context, for if in those times an individual family member lost his inheritance, it could within Biblical standards be redeemed (bought back) by family members. And our redeemer, that is Christ! He has become family, a brother. In Christ we have been adopted and we are therefore children of God. The letter to the Romans (8:17) testifies that in this capacity we are co-heirs with Christ. Sharing in his sufferings, we will also share in his glorification.

This glorification is expressed first of all in a renewal of creation. Now do not think that only the nation of Israel is in question when inheritance passes the revue. The whole world must be redeemed, for in Abraham, again according to the letter to the Romans (4:13), we are heirs of the 'world', that is, here on Earth and not in Heaven. This is something that calls our attention and is worth considering. It is not for nothing that one of the last chapters is called: "The New Heaven and Earth."

I hope your curiosity has been aroused. There is only one way to satisfy it: Read the book!

PART 3

The Dark Night of the Exile

About the mystic rapture – Theresia of Avila

Detail of an Altar Statue from 1646 by Lorenzo Bernini, where an angel pierces the heart of Theresia of Ávila with a burning arrow of the divine love (transverberation).

The dark night of exile is a theological term for the journey to union with God. A mystical journey lived by mystics such as John of the Cross and Theresa of Avila. This article shows that this mystical rapture is a universal Christian orientedness, which one also encounters in a foreman of the 19th century Dutch Revival, the Protestant William Bilderdijk (1756 - 1831).

William Bilderdijk is, as Bert Engelfriet calls him, 'an enduring building block'. And Conrad Busken Huet, the most outstanding Dutch poet of his time, appreciated in Bilderdijk's work a giant world of ideas. But that he would be a mystic, comparable to the sixteenth century mystics John of the Cross and Theresa of Avila, no one thought of that. While reading Engelfriet's book "The Mission of a Genius", a review of which is attached below, I discovered to my surprise that that comparison can very well be made. This article discusses aspects of Spanish mysticism with cross-references to the writings and thinking of William Bilderdijk.

‘The Dark Night’

John of the Cross

Once in the dark of night,
inflamed with love and wanting, I arose
- O coming of delight ! -
And went, as no one knows,
when all my house lay long in deep repose.

All in the dark went right,
down secret steps, disguised in other clothes,
- O coming of delight ! -
In dark when no one knows,
when all my house lay long in deep repose.

And in the luck of night,
in secret places where no other spied,
I went without my sight :
without a light to guide,
except the heart that lit me from inside.

It guided me and shone
- surer than noonday sunlight over me -
and lead me to the One,
Whom only I could see
deep in a place where only we could be.

O guiding dark of night !
O dark of night more darling than the dawn !
O night that can unite
a Lover and loved one,
a Lover and loved one moved in unison !

And on my flowering breast,
which I had kept for Him and Him alone,
He slept as I caressed
and loved Him for my own ;
breathing an air from redolent cedars blown.

And from the castle wall,
the wind came down to winnow through his hair,
bidding his fingers fall,
searing my throat with air,
and all my senses were suspended there.
I stayed there to forget ;
there on my Lover, face to face, I lay ;
all ended, and I let,
my cares all fell away,
forgotten in the lilies on that day…

The above poem is a translation by A.Z. Foreman. He comments: This is a touching-up of a poem I translated years ago. I get more emails on this translation than any other; some heavily critical, some extremely laudatory, and some somewhere in between. My impression, from the emails, is that many readers seem to be using this poem for devotional purposes, which is fine (hey, I wouldn't put my work up here if I weren't okay with people putting it to whatever use they wanted.) But a lot of you guys seem to be under the impression that I can offer theological/spiritual insights. Sorry to disappoint, but I am truly the last place you should look for spiritual guidance. I am an atheist. And no, I'm not interested in conversion. My interest in Saint John of the Cross is literary, not mystical.

26 – From anguish to contemplation

William Bilderdijk (1756-1831) was most deeply affected, not by his physical afflictions and attacks of hypochondria, but by his moral afflictions, by his anguish of soul. He regarded this suffering as a fate imposed on him from on high since his earliest youth. This suffering was therefore so profound because Bilderdijk was at the same time keenly aware of the eternal destiny that God had placed in his heart. For Bilderdijk, the meaning of suffering lay in the strong expectation of redemption from decay and the restoration of his relationship with God. Poetry offered him solace because it elevated his poetic soul to the divine light, which he perceived as purifying his suffering. As an exile on earth, he felt intensely connected to the people of Israel – the ever wandering people in their long night of exile.[65)]

Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831)

This seems like a great start for an article that deals with the dark night, a theme that is familiar ground within the Roman Catholic Church, especially through John of the Cross, who along with Therese of Avila founded the Order of Discalced Carmelites at a time when the old Carmelite order was suffering from decline. No small detail: both came from a converso family, a Jewish family converted to Catholicism.[66)] The name of the Carmelites is a reference to 1 Kings 18:41-45, which tells how the terrible drought that plagued the land came to an end. The Judeo-Christian tradition sees in the small cloud, which was spotted peering on the horizon, not only the messenger of rain to come, but also of messianic salvation, of the civilization of love, still awaiting.

On Mount Carmel in the Land of Israel in pre-Christian times lived hermits who were already yearning, praying and suffering, looking forward to the Messiah to deliver them out of this exile within exile, out of this home of mud and sorrow, to use the

65) This section is partly based on "De Missie van een Genie - De spirituele wereld van orangist Willem Bilderdijk" (The Mission of a Genius - The spiritual world of Orangist William Bilderdijk) by Bert Engelfriet – Amsterdam # 2010 (p. 158).
66) Remarkable for the time, the new monastic order they founded absorbed conversos. Anna of St. Bartholomew, in whose arms Therese of Avila died, founded the Carmelite convent in Antwerp. Calvinists converted to Catholicism were also absorbed.

words of Primo Levi.[67] Isaiah 45:8 reads: *"You heavens above, rain down my righteousness. Let the clouds shower it down. Let the earth open wide. Let salvation spring up. Let righteousness flourish with it!"* (rorate caeli desuper et nubes pluant iustum).

27 – Poetry, torch of the Eternal Word

The term of the dark night derives from a short poem written by the great mystic John of the Cross, when he was confined to the tiny, ghastly cell in a monastic prison for nine months. In later years, he elaborated verse for verse on the meaning of this poem in the treatise "The Dark Night of the Soul". He spoke of the dark night as an experience of spiritual purgation in which all physical and psychological satisfactions are stripped away to leave the soul in the presence of none but the physically invisible God – and therefore, to human experience it is 'dark' – being then submitted to the silent workings of divine grace. John of the Cross also defines that night as the nakedness and freedom of the soul so that union with God can be realized, also referred to as the ascension of Carmel.[68] "The Dark Night" is considered one of the best poems Spanish literature has produced.

Like this 16th-century mystic, Bilderdijk was also a great poet, one of the greatest the Dutch-speaking world has produced. *"The art of poetry is for him a torch that brightens the divine nature of creation, a fire that purifies the heart and a light that gives us certainty, because it teaches the order of creation, the unity of all small diversities in one great conception."* [69] *And also: "Poetry does not impose order on nature, nor does it imitate it, but through the word it reveals its essence: language must elevate the soul of the receiver of words to the Eternal Word."*[70] Bilderdijk's conception of the rank of science in relation to 'feeling', or divine inspiration, is in tune with the Church tradition. Thus he notes, along with St. Anselmus (1033-1109), who wrote on the essence of knowledge, that man discovers God through the power of his intellect and through words, but that the heart is necessary to know God in his indivisibility ...and even then! The burning desire to know God, the Word that is above every word, is always inadequately satisfied! [71] This ties in with what the Great Conchita of Mexico (1862-1937) says: *"And all this time I thought that the gift of knowledge is a talent bestowed on man to learn from books! Now I understand that it is a gift that goes directly to the heart and enlightens the soul…"* [72]

23 – The ascent of the Carmel

The Dark Night poem expresses the journey of the soul from her bodily home to her union with God, I read in Wikipedia. What a striking resemblance to Bilderdijk's choice of words when he described his own literary work! The discussion continues:

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67) "Moments of Reprieve" by Primo Levi # 1981, 1985 (pp. 41-42): "She (the Shekina) let herself be enslaved and is here around them, in this exile within exile, in this home of mud and sorrow."

68) "The ascent of Carmel - A retreat for devout souls" by Lawrence C. Diether # 1935 is the title of a book containing the collected spiritual works of St. John of the Cross.

69) Engelfriet, ibid p. 173.

70) Engelfriet, ibid p. 189.

71) Bilderdijk's views regarding the order of precedence of the sciences can be found in his writing: "Verhandelingen ziel-, zede-, en rechtsleer betreffende" - Leiden # 1821 (p. 158). He himself does not refer to Anselmus. See also Engelfriet, ibid p. 137.

72) "La vie dans L'Esprit Saint" by Concepción Cabrera de Armida (Conchita), an anthology compiled by Dominique Reyre - Éd. de l'Emmanuel, Paris # 2009 (p. 64). The 'venerable' Conchita was the mother of nine children and came from the better off families. She left an immense œuvre (60,000 pages), a kind of diary that she wrote down in communion with God.

«« It happens during the mystic night, which represents the hardships and difficulties the soul meets in detachment from this world, that it reaches the light of the union with the Creator. There are several steps in this journey of the night, which are related in the successive stanzas of John's poem. The main idea is the painful experience the beloved one endures in his or her quest for spiritual maturity and union with God. »»

Who was William Bilderdijk?

William Bilderdijk (1756-1831) was a Dutch historian, linguist, poet and lawyer. As a private tutor, he gave lessons in Dutch history to pupils from people of name, by which, indirectly, he exerted great political and religious influence. In 1823, his principal pupil Isaac da Costa published the controversial "De Bezwaren tegen den Geest der Eeuw" (Objections to the Spirit of the Century), written entirely in the typical Bilderdijkian style. Bilderdijk's reactionary views led to fierce polemics, which provided him with more enemies than friends. One of his main opponents was the Catholic apologist and historian Joachim le Sage ten Broek, who regularly attacked him on his religious beliefs and invited him in a public letter to return to the Catholic Church. William Bilderdijk was a multifaceted man, a visionary, in a politically and culturally turbulent time. Up close, he experienced the consequences of the French Revolution, and he was even exiled from the Netherlands for refusing to recognize the government under French rule.

He was vilified, written off by many. In my opinion completely unjustified. The great Busken Huet called Bilderdijk a *"nightingale among the bastard nightingales",* thus expressing his great appreciation for Bilderdijk. Busken Huet, while criticizing his deviant Messianic pretensions, did not question his integrity and even compared him to King David who, by his pen of poetry, taunted his enemies.

In an interview in the Rotterdams Dagblad of November 30, 2010, Dr. Bert Engelfriet says: *"I wonder how many high schools still pay substantial attention to Bilderdijk. Already in his own time he acquired a certain reputation, ...and that is a difficult thing to get rid of! To the 19th-century Eighty Movement, which had radically broken with ancient literature, we owe, for example, the name that he got for writing rhetorical poetry: much form but little content. The Bilderdijk Museum in Amsterdam, of which I was once a member, also treats him as a kind of antiquity. Completely out of place as far as I am concerned. And with Busken Huet I am not in the worst company on this point."*

The undersigned himself hardly understands what the mystical ascent to God entails. Father Grégoire, who had spent his life studying the mystical path, begins in the preface to a book on John of the Cross by stating that his knowledge is insufficient to explain and make him understand what the dark night means. So if you, reader, find some expressions difficult to grasp, we can reach out to each other. The fact that you continue reading shows that the mystical night is not entirely foreign to you. For the gap between being removed from God and experiencing God's presence runs right through the middle of every person. A true Christian feels burdened, even a prisoner, in this body of corruption. (Rom. 7:24) The Hebrew for exile also means captive. The rapture that Bilderdijk and John of the Cross experienced was highly exceptional, but will soon be within everyone's reach in the restored paradisiacal state. It is the fall in Paradise that brought about a separation between us and God and between humans themselves. From then on, man became the eternal exile. This means that our miserable condition was not originally willed by God, although the fall is not entirely without benefit. For at the 'return home' there is the re-'uni'-fication, there will be cause for incomparable joy. Those who have once, through accident, for example, gone blind,

will be ecstatic when, through an operation, sight is completely restored, a joy that otherwise would never have been felt.

For that return, John of the Cross points out, in the painful process of what constitutes normal life, one must rid oneself of all sensuality and natural inclinations, even the memory of them, because the unclean and the pure (God) have no communion with each other. And above all, he says, one should not force the mind. The desire for that communion, that may be cherished as with the doe thirsting for water. In passivity, one should turn to God and wait until He deigns to come to us.[73] After all, the Word says: *"Turn your eyes away from Me, for they cause Me to flee away."* (Vulgate, Song of Songs 6:5) This means that the encounter is also reserved for those who have never read anything about it and do not 'train' for it. One should not think that it is a technique. It is an orientation. Here the difference with transcendental meditation shows itself. In the encounter, the theological term is contemplation, God will see to it that our sensuality (the five senses) and natural inclinations are grandly redefined. After a God-nurtured (gradual) transformation, this kind of encounter no longer requires a prior detachment of the earthly, because the old is no more.[74] Behold, all things are new! (2 Cor. 5:17) But precisely because 'the ascent of the Carmel' is not a technique but a question of being elected, one should not be surprised if this 'new' is not for me or you, or just partially, and that, like Paul, we have to continue struggling between what I want according to God's purpose, What I'm doing wrong nevertheless. (Rom. 7:18)

The mystical marriage

How can one turn to God in passivity? Simple: God is Love and only by practicing 'love thy neighbor and God above all' can the Holy Spirit take up residence in us. In a petrified mind, the Holy Spirit cannot and will not take up residence and thus Jesus' high priestly prayer cannot be fulfilled there either: "Let them all be one, Father. As You are in Me and I in You, so let them also be in Us." (John 17:21) This ties in with what the Great Conchita says: *"I remembered having felt that look of Jesus on me and acting like a purifying bath destined to prepare me for his coming. Oh, how Jesus purifies without delay the soul that loves Him! And who seeks Him! And desires these appointments of love!"* [75]

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73) "Oeuvres spirituelles de saint Jean de la Croix" – Éditions Du Seuil, Paris # 1960 (pp. 283, 305-07).

74) In fact, as I read in a book published by Carmelitana Publishers, Theresa's raptures were less frequent with advancing age, which one sees as a sign of inner growth; the spiritually mature Theresa apparently had less need for them.

75) Conchita, ibid p. 37.

She also writes by the mouth of Jesus, or whispered in by the Holy Spirit:

> «« The fruits of the Cross (wisdom, power, light) are the fruits of the Holy Spirit. However, souls have begun to keep this most pure Holy Spirit away from them by defiling themselves with their faults. They remain in darkness for lack of invoking Him who is the light and they are all frozen for lack of approaching the fire, and this divine fire goes away when the fire of passions comes in a heart (...) Do you know when I made my nest in your soul? It was when you became my Cross [suffering carried by pure love, consisting of self denial]. My nest is the Cross and the Cross serves as my nest. My nest is always in the shape of a cross. (…) Take care of my nest, for there are three enemies who want to destroy it: the world, vanity and pride. As soon as these enemies touch my nests, I no longer want them, just as the doves of the earth no longer want theirs as soon as someone touches them. (…) The only remedy to avoid this great misfortune is to hide my nest from the eyes of men, hide it, my daughter, hide Me with the utmost care. »» [76)]

29 – Drawn into soulful rapture

The mystical night is accompanied by soul rapture as the soul is lifted up from the earthly into the heavenly, typified by Paul as the third heaven: (2 Cor. 12:2-4)

> «« I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know – only God knows. And I know that this man – whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows – was caught up to Paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell [to a mortal man in his present condition]. »»

It is being drawn to God, not an identification with nature, which latter is the characteristic condition of Hinduistic or transcendental meditation, noting that at the center in between the chakras [77)] one resides in total nothingness (Hebr. b'lee mah: that which is without something, or 'silence'), and then climbs up through the subsequent chakras in the inner odyssey [78)] towards fusion with nature (Brahman), which elucidates that it's a surrogate experience for union with God, and therefore remains a serious form of idolatry. For the created, whether it's the whole universe or just a part of 'nature' (what an innocent sounding word!), is not to be exchanged for the Creator Himself. Man was made in such a way, so that God could dwell in him and no other. Our God

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76) Conchita, ibid pp. 44-46. That there are writings on the experience of 'unification' is never on one's own initiative, sometimes at the direct behest of God or at the earnest request of those closest to her/him, or of a confessor, as in the case of Therese of Avila, who did so reluctantly and would rather have gone spinning. Her writings have been called a milestone in the history of mysticism. But the same can also be said of those of John of the Cross.

77) The word chakra refers to churning wheels of energy. According to Eastern teachings, a number of these 'wheels' lie on the human spine with each step corresponding to a particular illumination or state of mind.

78) Odyseuss means 'road to God' (odos Zeus). The Odyssey is the epic of Odysseus' wanderings. Through the odyssey into his inner self, our hero undergoes a series of initiation rites that lead him to the blackness below, here called Hades. When he ends up with the goddess Calypso after his initiation, he is anything but happy and falls prey to violent attacks of despair. Odyseuss again chooses the sea, where he is swept away by the antics of wind and sea. Such is the fate of those who walk the alternative path. They suffer from the 'tedium vitae' (melancholy) in exchange for which they are endowed with genius, that is, the genius of God's opponent, the Luciferian angel of light.

is a jealous God. There is no worse insult to our Beloved if we allow something else to dwell in us instead of our Beloved, our God! The autonomous man, the individualistic loner, is a chimera. One belongs to one or the other. A middle ground does not exist. He who believes in the autonomous man is already with one foot in Hell!

Transfiguration on the Mountain (Raphael, finished by Giulio Romano)

Being drawn to God typically fits Bilderdijk. In the poem "De Geestenwareld" (The Spiritual World) he describes the experience of the rapture of one's soul, in which gravity, space and time are dissolved: [79)]

Thus spoke I, as my soul disclosed a soft feeling,
That lifted me up out of me-self and this withering earth.

This mystical experience shows a clear disassociation of body and soul. Through the senses of the body, the poet can no longer communicate with the higher world. Hence he tries to ascend to the divine world through the deeper consciousness (of the mystical night).

Not any dust, so I felt, could attract my power to thinking,
I breathed no air, nor felt the heart beat.
But was of brilliant radiance swarmed and drenched.
'Tis all my' body-light, yet dark to eyes.

The 'body-light' referred to here is not a material body, but a 'garment of holiness, sprung from the power of the soul', also called the 'body-light'.

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79) Engelfriet, ibid pp. 196-97 (quoted until: ...was born).

'Sense of being was ennobled and deified.
A higher sense than my own sprouted,
And the elated soul, lost in God and Spirit,
Immersed in the springwell from which it was born.

30 – From unification to servanthood

In Heaven is the triumphant church. Here on Earth the struggling one. When we share in Jesus' glorification it goes hand in hand with standing in his ministry, foremost the ministry of reconciliation. Through the transformation of the natural man, our praying and doing is clothed by God, which expresses itself in a productive life. Both, Theresa of Avila and John of the Cross, left a mark on their times, despite the fierce opposition to them. And that may be said of Willem Bilderdijk equally well.

The ministry in which Therese and John stood was primarily that of prayer, the main occupation of their monastic communities. We should not think that prayer consists only of words. Seeing wrongs around us that make our heart suffer out of sympathy with how they offend God's majesty and infinite goodness, that kind of prayer is a true pearl. The inner pain, the pains of soul, is the most important, and indeed Jesus' physical suffering was only the overflowing of the cup. That is why, even before being caught, He was sweating blood. It should be clear that only those who have experienced the 'unification' up to a certain extent – we would now say: those who live from the fullness of the Holy Spirit – that only they can truly sympathize with God (understanding is different). Saints are actually people who show 'com'-passion with God. Jesus' servants will feel some of his torment inside them every time they witness sin. Think of blasphemy, debauchery, cruelty, war and abortion. The mystical night is not there for seclusion and ecstatic happiness; it serves a purpose, as in the glorification on the mount. (Mt. 17:1-13) From the heights of Tabor [80)] up to the heights of Golgotha! And from Golgotha to the heights of Pentecost!

80) According to ancient lore, the glorification took place on Mount Tabor. Alternative lore points to the Hermon.

This is eternal life, that they know You the only true God.
(John 17:3)

The Mercy of God is... the most glorious, tenderest
and most liberating Gift of God in its Totality,
as I experienced "God-Self" during my unique God-Experience
and "Revelation of His infinite Love and Light towards me..."

I was literally floating, and figuratively too – swirling around,
as it were, in His All-encompassing and Immense Love...
There was no beginning nor end... in God!
Floating implies : "a complete liberation from the
gravity of the sins that push us down to earth!"

I experienced "God" as the "Totally Other One",
wholly unlike anything else on earth,
that for certain no earthly words could describe!
He let me know: "I am the ALFA and the OMEGA" !!
God gave me an "unusually blissful feeling, as if I
had always known Him, and He me through and through,
down to each hair on my head ...

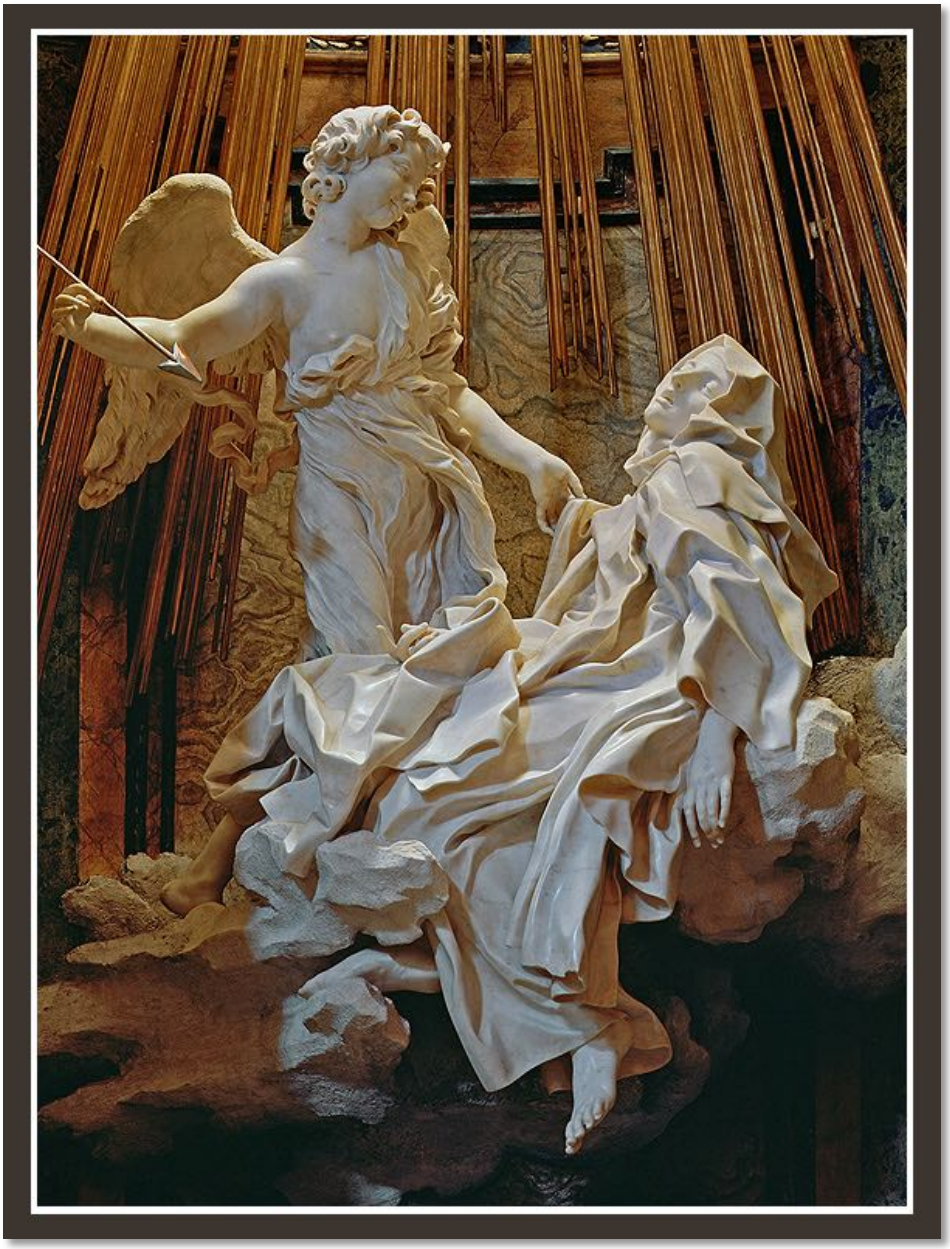
All these feelings and the whole "perception and experience itself,
of being in God for just a split second", were so overwhelming,
that nothing and nobody, not even time, could make me doubt this!

I just knew: "THIS IS GOD!!!"
He gave me an utmost, very peaceful feeling!
It was truly "a coming home into the Light, into God that IS"!
Here I belonged completely, undeniably!
This was the feeling of "total and at the same time plain acceptance"!
I did not have to do anything to be accepted in this "Light"!
It was as if I had "finally found the True Love"!
The Love I had unconsciously always sought!
Now, there she was, and hów??!!

Never could I have dreamed of such an experience!
She was very, very gentle and intense and realistic,
like I had never experienced "Reality" before!
The whole time I felt something like:
"Wow!!!" "What is that here? Could this be God?"
Immediately I got the confirmation,
that I could no longer have any doubts!
He let me know: "I AM THE ALFA AND THE OMEGA".

Actually, there in that "Light of God" I gained an enormous
amount of knowledge about the Divine Nature!!
How He is! Who He is! How humble He is!
How Ténder He is! How Merciful He is!
How Soft and how Sweet He is!
I thought: "Now I understand the invocation of:
"Jesus, Sweetness of heart, have mercy on us!"

Undersigned: the Father's little Marylove



Transverberation of Saint Teresa of Avila
This day is celebrated each year on August 26th.
Avila's feast day is on October 15th.

The term transverberation comes from the Latin 'transverberare' and means 'to pierce through'. In mystical literature it is also known by the Italian term 'ferita', meaning 'wound' or 'heart wound'. It is often referred to as the Seraph's assault, because it is commonly accompanied by a vision of an angel who inflicts the wound – a wound of love that inflames the soul with the love for God. At the same time it is a purification, and that is what causes the pain, for otherwise the soul could not be elevated to that particular state of communion with God.

REVIEW

‘The Mission of a Genius’ (De missie van een genie)

Undertitle : The spiritual world of William Bilderdijk (1756-1831)

Author : Bert Engelfriet

Publisher : © 2010 Buijten & Schipperheijn – Amsterdam

In 1989 Engelfriet contributed to a symposium on Bilderdijk’s personal library, which was published in a volume. In 1995, he received his doctorate on the subject of “Bilderdijk and Judaism”. And in 2006 he published in “Seeing Abraham” on the perspective on Israel by writers in the West. In addition, articles from his pen on Bilderdijk appeared regularly.

First the title. By ‘genius’, Engelfriet is referring to thinking that exceeds the autonomous mind. Man’s illusory autonomy is a favorite subject for Bilderdijk. *“Influenced by the thinking of the French philosopher Descartes (1596-1650), the thinking self is autonomized; this subject exists only by the grace of thought. (…) The mind does not judge autonomously, but depends on the notion of the good, which does exist independently.”* (p. 59) Engelfriet would not go so far as to call Bilderdijk – in the subservient role of his mind – a prophet, but he can agree that his life was lived and inspired from God. In his day, that made Bilderdijk the misunderstood and maligned loner. He tried to let himself be directed by divine inspiration and did not let his heart be enslaved by the spirit of the times, the mind drift of the demos. Still his religious and literary legacy is misunderstood, most recently in 1998, with the publication of “Higher Spheres” by Joris van Eijnatten, who denounced him as an immodest and

loud-mouthed individualist and had - totally unjustified - a low opinion of the way Bilderdijk had incorporated the Christian tradition.

The Mission of a Genius is a clever piece of work with a wealth of data and reflections. It is not an easy read, but those who make the effort will certainly be rewarded: I found the final chapters most interesting. A discussion would have been useful on the kind of publications that have seen the light of day on Bilderdijk in the past with an explanation of why this book fills a gap. The beauty of this book is that it attempts to unravel the inner world of Bilderdijk through his statements, actions and work. Within his thinking, the Christian faith and the role of Israel have a central place. His views were unique in his time. Bilderdijk was an ‘original’ thinker (for the components of this see p. 97ff.), though attention should be paid to his use of the term ‘innovative’, for not every new thought is rooted in the divine, only the expression of the divine is original, he believed.

As an Orangist and so soon after the French Revolution, Bilderdijk had much to say about the state structure to be adhered to. Through his teaching position, he had much influence on some of the great men of his time. Groen van Prinsterer was his pupil as well as Isaac da Costa. That says it all.

Bilderdijk was a driven man who did not care about the communis opinio, which did not prevent him from also being a child of his time. No one can escape the flow. He was erudite, an autodidact, and thus knew the mainstream philosophers and can be mirrored by them, although he always had his own idiosyncratic explanations (in the positive sense). He was also familiar with the mystical scriptures of Judaism, and this is well reflected here in this book. Engelfriet contrasts Bilderdijk’s ideas with the thinkers of his time. To illustrate: Descartes, Goethe, Hegel, Kant, Leibnitz, Newton, Nietzsche, Rousseau, Schopenhauer, Spinoza and Voltaire are listed at 179 pages, with Kant topping the list at 36 pages and Leibnitz a close second at 31. This numerical listing indicates that these comparisons run throughout the book, and Engelfriet does so skillfully.

For lovers of patriotic history and for those who still see a religious future for the Netherlands, a return to God, yes, for them this book is eminently valuable.

APPENDIX 13

Our Coat of hair, or the Nature of the Occult

There is a somewhat typical prophecy by the Prophet Zechariah that indicates how God feels about so-called magic and divination. He tells us that in the messianic age, God will not allow any prophets to put on a coat of hair to lie. A coat of hair means they are governed by animal instincts. John the Baptist too wore a coat of hair,[81)] but God had purified him in the school of hardship which made him look more like an angel than a man. Even when they receive God's promptings, the lying prophets are like jammers producing their own sound, and on top of it they are terribly proud of it. The following verses are paraphrased:

> «« On that day, is the divine word of Yahweh of hosts, I will chase out of the land the false prophets who are afflicted with an unclean spirit. If anyone dares to impersonate such a prophet, his very parents will say: *"You will not live because you speak lies in God's Name."* If that son nevertheless continues to act as a prophet of lies, his father and mother will pierce him so that he dies. On that day all such prophets will be ashamed of the visions they receive, and will not dare to clothe themselves to speak lies with a coat of hair (the worldly, even cosmic). Nay, such a person will say: *"I am not a prophet, only a farmer; I have had a cropland from childhood."* And if asked: *"Then where did the wounds in your hands come from?"* he will answer: *"They were inflicted in the house of my friends."* »»

To clarify the meaning of a coat of hair, or the magic out of the ordinary, i.e. of what lies locked up in the invisible part of the cosmos, we now turn to homeopathic methods as an example of an essentially occult practice, something that, according to Leviticus 19:31, we are not allowed to get involved with.

Homeopathy is a system of medicine developed between 1790 and 1843 by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician. Homeopathy functions at its best when the dilution of the active substance is so great that there are almost no molecules of the original substance left, or none at all. Hahnemann claimed that homeopathy functions by "a condensation of cosmic energy". With this kind of terminology we are in occult territory using an esoteric language that is very difficult to understand! Like reiki, it is healing with cosmic energy (energy healing). Thus defined cosmic energy equals occult energy, i.e. hidden from the eye! Because the immeasurable is outside his field, a scientist cannot say how homeopathy works. Only healing can be observed because it does not work physically/chemically. There is also no placebo effect because it can cure animals. A psychosomatic cure in animals is impossible! It has been sufficiently demonstrated that homeopathy is a therapy that works, though it is not an allopathic

81) In Genesis 37, the coat of many colors of Patriarch Joseph, son of Jacob, is the ornate garment that his father gave him in a place called Vayeshev (וַיֵּשֶׁב - Hebrew for 'and he lived'). This iridescent dressing gown is antitype to a coat of hair and represents the unblemished prophetic gift Joseph had received from the most holy God, who has the supreme multi-coloured wisdom (Ps 104:24, Eph 3:10), which only He may call His own. The embroidered garment is also an image of God's creation, interweaving thousands of seemingly unrelated threads into one glorious pattern. The Popol Vuh ("The Nexus" by David Allen Deal, p. 16 #1993) by the way, mentions that Joseph's bones were carried off in a coffin during the Exodus while he was dressed in this fine garment (his shroud), a detail neither Flavius Josephus nor the Talmud cites, but which does not seem unlikely. In 1 Kings 19:19, Elijah throws the prophet's cloak at Elisha; again, that same image of a cloak and the gift of prophecy.

medicine that works through the presence of a material substance. We are talking about immaterial substances here. Immaterial means 'spiritual'. Now those substances too were created by God with a useful purpose in mind. What, then, is the problem? It is not so much those imperceptible substances or energies that are the problem in the acceptance of homeopathy by sincere Christians, but rather the creatures that have rebelled against God and begun to inhabit this space, harbouring little sympathy for us human beings for whom God has set aside a special destiny – to be envied. Practitioners of 'energy healing' prefer to speak of the 'astral realm' which, with its energies, lies in between the divine and the material. And this now, it is said, can be tapped through the homeopathic technique. The term astral comes from astrology and should rather be replaced with the Biblical term cosmos.

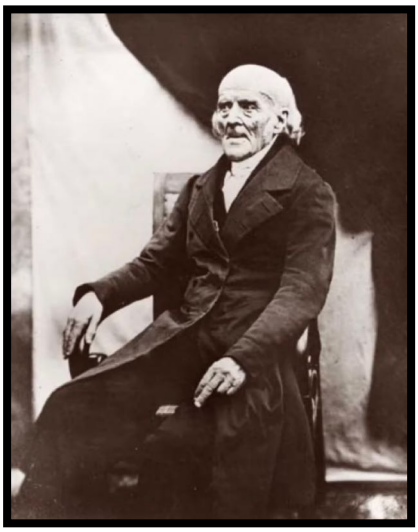
This astral realm, the Apostle Paul calls the heavenly realms: *"For we do not contend against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly realms."* (Eph. 6:12) It seems logical that this realm must be traversed in one way or another (for some lightning fast) in order to arrive at our destination in the hereafter. It is the sensation of this in-between which corresponds to what is known in scientific circles as the "Near Death Experience" (NDE), a term we owe to Raymond Moody. It is this realm that should be overcome during our prayer, which sometimes only happens after persistent communal prayer, or through fasting. A breakthrough is visualized by the column of fire or cloud that rested on the tabernacle in the desert. (Ex. 40:34-38, Num. 9:15-19) Through this breakthrough, during their 40-years trek, the Israelites were protected from the evil powers, and could God more easily attend to the daily needs of his people. A similar breakthrough occurs each time during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and it therefore provides a perfect opportunity to present our prayers to God.

Unfortunately, it cannot be determined how those cosmic entities (energies, desperately wandering spirits, demons) are somehow effectively involved in homeopathy. It is and remains a foggy area. The key question is: what exactly happens in potentising? Potentisation or dynamisation is a method of preparation of a homeopathic medicine, in which an active substance is repeatedly and sequentially diluted which is accompanied by intensive shaking. To get an idea of what a dilution means: D10 corresponds to a drop in a swimming pool; D20 to a few drops in the North Sea. A dilution of D100 is quite normal (10 to the power of 100). Some solutions are so highly diluted that it is very unlikely that there is even a single molecule of the original active substance in such a vial. Consequently, the efficacy of such a thing can only be mental. This takes us beyond experimental physics that deals exclusively with the observable and shields itself from the occult/ invisible. But that does not prove that it is without effect. It is and remains extremely irritating to deal with a method that works but is scientifically inexplicable.

The immaterial cosmos has suffered defilement – a defilement that will be removed by the application of Christ's blood, about which chapters 8 and 9 of Hebrews speaks in terms of the heavenly tabernacle. Its cleansing, as announced in 2 Corinthians 5:19, will open the gate. The Old Testament tabernacle has always been seen in Jewish tradition as a representation of the cosmos. Has its cleansing happened yet? No, for otherwise the Prophet Zechariah, in a depiction of the Reign of Peace, would not speak of a lying prophet. There will come a time after the so-called cleansing of the cosmos when we will be allowed to appropriate that territory. Right now, the supernatural (not the unnatural) is off limits: No entry! Cave canem, watch out for the dog!!

Only in the Great Day of Judgement, at the end of the Reign of Peace, the cosmic filth will be purged and washed away, an event we are looking forward to. This is represented by the mikveh cleansing ritual, I have written about in "The Nature of the Soul" (2nd part last section). One can read Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan's booklet "Waters of Eden - the Mystery of Mikveh" to get to know more about it. Published by the National Council for Synagogue Youth in 1976, it deals with renewal and rebirth. While reading, one becomes ever more astonished. This is real Jewish tradition that you can get your teeth into. Are you aware, for instance, that the God of the Old Testament identifies Himself with the baptismal water? First let me tell that mikveh means hope or expectation, and also a flowing together of water, a crowd, a company. In Leviticus 11:36 we meet the mikveh: *"Nevertheless a spring or a cistern holding water shall be clean."* Here in the Hebrew is a triple mention of the same concept (the word mikveh only once). This number is an important element. Mikveh figures in Genesis 1:10, in Exodus 7:19 and, as said, in Leviticus 11:36. Three times the Thora tells that God is the mikveh, the expectation, and three times it is about the mikveh waters. Therefore the Jew submerges himself three times in the mikveh bath. This bath is a place where (orthodox) Jewish women go for purification after a menstrual period, but it is sometimes used by men and for conversion to Judaism. God calls Himself in Jeremiah 3x the Mikveh of Israel (in 14:8, 17:13 and 50:7). Ultimately, the mikveh bath is a prefiguration of the cleansing of the cosmos.

That homeopathy belongs to the Biblically forbidden practice, and is not at all as innocent as we are led to believe, is shown by the experience of well-known exorcist Gabriele Amorth (1925-2016), the chief exorcist of Rome. He once conducted an experiment after being confronted by a possessed in whom he had not achieved liberation after two years of exorcism. He kept guessing about the cause of her possession. In exorcism, it is always important to find the moment and reason that opened the door to ever further possession. What transpired is that this lady had been taking homeopathic remedies for up to 20 years. Due to this experience, Amorth concluded that those cures are connected to the world of demons! He found that her demons even had names of the homeopathic remedies she used! *)



Samuel Hahnemann in 1841, shortly after the invention of the daguerreotype. Hahnemann was from 1755. John Owen from Salisbury is the earliest born human immortalised in a photograph. Born in 1735, he lived to be 107.

Extremely worryingly, Hahnemann was like his father actively involved in Freemasonry. He was a member of the lodge "Sankt Andreas zu den drei Seeblättern" (St Andrew to the three sea leaves), in Hermannstadt, Düsseldorf. Hahnemann also delved into Taoism, which is known to deal with magic. Hahnemann also used a symbolic language linked to demonism! Martin Gumpert published in 1945 a translation from German: "Hahnemann: The Adventurous Career of a Medical Rebel". It reveals that he studied and delighted in the teachings of the occult practicioner Paracelsus (1493-1541), who developed a medical theory that combined the inferior part of the Cabbala with pseudo-science. Hahnemann was also drawn to the ideas of his contemporary Franz Mesmer (1733-1815), who was a Swiss-German physician who discovered 'animal magnetism' (is coat of hair), later called mesmerism. Mesmer popularized an occult art, traditionally used by shamans and Satanists, as a way to control people,

known today as hypnotism. In a particular setting it is used to create totally mind controlled 'monarch slaves'. Marilyn Monroe was such a slave. It is said that Mesmer only used his hypnotic technique to heal patients, but that doesn't give people a carte blanche to put it into practice. In his homeopathic bible from 1810, "Organon of Medicine" (Organon der rationellen Heilkunde), Hahnemann compares homeopathy with mesmerism: (1st English ed. from 1901: §293 en §294)

> «« I find it yet necessary to allude here to animal magnetism, as it is defined, or rather mesmerism. (…) It is a marvelous, priceless gift from God (…) by means of which the strong will of a well-intentioned person upon a sick one [and if not well-intentioned?] by means of contact and even without this and even at some distance, can bring the vital energy of the healthy mesmerizer endowed with this power [partly endowed by demons] into another person dynamically. (…) The above mentioned methods of practicing mesmerism depend upon an influx of more or less vital force into the patient [human and partly demonic]. »»

In the same sections, Hahnemann speaks of negative mesmerism in these terms:

> «« All the above mentioned methods of practising mesmerism depend upon an influx of more or less vital force into the patient, and hence are termed positive mesmerism. An opposite mode of employing mesmerism, however, as it produces just the contrary effect, deserves to be termed negative mesmerism (…) that will effect a monstrous revolution of the whole human system, termed somnanbulism [mind control], wherein the human being is ravished from the world of sense and seems to belong more to the world of spirits (sic) – a highly unnatural and dangerous state [the object thus being robbed of the most precious of all, his free will]. »»

May the above serve as a warning not to engage in homeopathic practices or other kind of invisible energy healing (medicinal infrared radiation is not invisible for instruments), not because it cannot heal, but because by doing so we are treading on slippery ground where the salvation of our soul is at stake. **A healthy body at the price of our eternal salvation? This is reminiscent of Esau who traded his firstborn right for a plate of lentil soup.** For it is written in the Ancient Book of Jasher (Ch. 27): *"[The fearsome warrior] Nimrod died by the sword of Esau in shame and contempt. Terribly exhausted Esau returns home and says unto his brother Jacob: 'Behold I shall die this day, [it's like a deadly ailment], and wherefore then do I want the birthright?'"*

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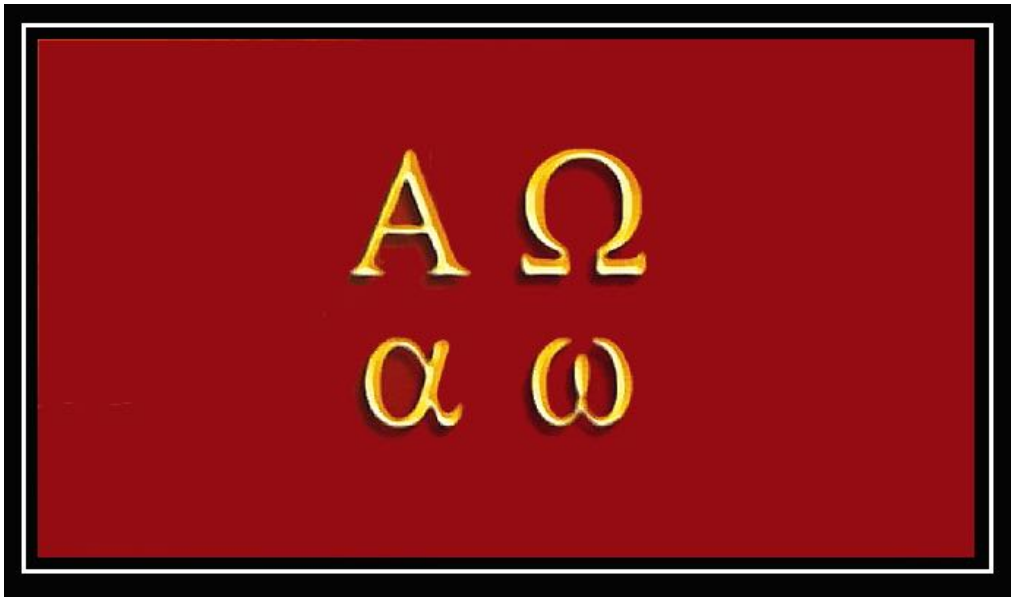
*) A persistent rumour is circulating that the COVID vaccinations were potentized and that the same will happen with each subsequent vaccination being mandated globally, with the intended effect that with each follow-up the recipient will become increasingly blind to God's light, the light of truth, of which Christ says: "I am the way, the truth and the life".

PART 4

Thy Will Be Done



It is not sufficient to believe in God and at the same time to consider that his teachings and commandments do not need to be followed. Belief without works is empty (Hebr. 6:1, James 2:14-20). Living one's belief requires a commitment, renewed daily, to live according to God's holy will. Every morning should begin with the simple question: "What do you, God, want me to do today?" To which a concrete response – not an intellectual one – must follow. We can fill our daily routine with an interpretation centred on God. That is what is known as following the will of God. This is what our belief should be. God must be placed at the centre of our existence so that He can spread his grace in and around us. Giving Him the first place means dying to ourselves so that God can live in us. It means letting ourselves be re-shaped and healed through Him. And allowing ourselves to be guided by Him, often quietly and unobtrusively. A living and active faith that God's love radiates, leads to the doing of his will – according to the saying: do, and God will do.

31 – The law in our innermost being

Not everyone lives in the circumstance, due to outside factors, to believe in the God of the Bible. God has found a solution to this, for there is a law written in everyone's innermost being. (Rom. 2:14-15) This corresponds to the Divine Will that no one can fail to know. From childhood, everyone knows that God only wishes good and also wants to see it put into practice. Everyone knows, unless this knowledge is vigorously denied (1 Tim. 4:1-2), that God hates evil, always and everywhere. Evil knows no justification. Never. Every one knows that to refrain from doing good in order to do evil is a grave sin contrary to the Divine Will. Putting oneself in God's place in order to dominate others is an unspeakable evil. Rejection of the impulse of grace is against

the will of God. Opposition to God, which means missing one's vocation or frustrating that of others, is a sin – one can easily guess – that fills God with horror.

There is also a general will of God, enshrined in the Ten Commandments. Who does not know that God desires respect for life, a commandment that now – sanctioned by the state – is trodden underfoot? Who does not know that God's Holy Name must be honoured and that the day of the Lord must be respected (the little there is left of it)? Everyone should know that the mutual love between husband and wife is a great good that should not be treated the same as love between men – but that seems to be precisely what we are invited to do, through the institutionalisation of gay marriage.

Furthermore, the Lord's Prayer teaches us a wonderful, simple summary that meets the need for God's will to live, and is so formulated that it is within everybody's reach. But see what this has led to! A poor result, because darkness covers the earth. There are rumours of war; disaster piled on disaster. By his conceit, Mankind, from earlier youth on, has lost the sense of evil. The civil laws have turned God's laws into worthless scraps of paper. Mankind, nowadays, denies and abnegates himself, no longer recognises his worth as a child of God. Here by 'mankind' I mean the larger community who have turned away from God. What about that other group to which our readers belong?

Jesus and Mary

Your Holy Church

Saint Joseph and all Saints

In the Very Holy Trinity

J.N.S.R. May 21 2010

32 – Being a Child of God

A good friend of mine, who contributes to the magazine "Being Child of God" under the pseudonym of Pater Familias, recently confided to me (Oct. 2011) that he had been walking around for several days with the thought and prayer:

> «« O good God, Thou hast in Thy goodness accepted me as a child of God in my holy Baptism, and hast given me the special task of keeping this mystery of faith alive among all my fellow believers.
>
> At one point, it was as if I was prompted: *"No, you don't have to comprehend that. You can't fathom it, you can only humbly and gratefully accept it as a secret of faith, taking into consideration these two points: it is due to Christ's life, suffering and death that baptized souls receive this supreme gift, as well as:* ***it has as its consequence that a child of God's sole concern and mission is to accomplish the will of the heavenly Father in all things and full of love****."* I mentioned this to a good friend, who responded: *"Think of St. Augustine who also wanted to fathom a certain secret of faith, but an angel showed him that this was 'carrying water to the sea.'"* »»

Regarding those two points about being child of God, one can think of the parable of the prodigal son. (Luke 15:11-31) Was he ever a non-son? Nay indeed! Nevertheless, he had to be adopted again as a son in the sense of co-heir. If we look at Romans 8,

which speaks of the 'spirit of being a child' that makes us cry out Abba and makes us realize that we are co-heirs with Christ, scribe sees it rather this way: as 'again' adopted children of God. And see, that is the mystery of faith that we cannot fathom in this life. 'Abba' is correctly translated 'father', appropriate to the condition of a grown up.[82)] However, who in their prayers calls God the Father 'Papa' with the emotional charge of when we were babes and sucklings? (Ps. 8) Mystical literature knows, as far as I know, of no saint who was accustomed to addressing God the Father as Pappa. This underscores my argument. The bottom line is that we humans do not yet fully stand in the childhood of God – and that was also this friend's hunch. That state is apparently reserved for later.

Does the parable of the prodigal son apply here, we might ask. It does. When a man comes into being - at conception - God uses his parents in order to bring about his humanity. The soul, however, is created directly by God. God therefore claims the first fatherhood, which is expressed when Eve exclaims (Gen. 4:1): *"I got a man 'from God'!"*, in this case Cain, Cain child of God, who went wandering, like the prodigal son. Human parenthood, then, is a derivative parenthood. The essence of the soul, infused by God, is identical whether before or after the Fall. The body with which the soul forms an indissoluble unity is the disruptive factor, and therein we discover a clear difference before and after the Fall, in which the body has been given primacy, as it were, in an ever-increasing downward spiral throughout history, cause of social decay. (Body here is the image for the inherited character traits.)

To this the friend replicated:

> «« That may have been correctly noted, but at baptism this naturally formed man, who forfeits the glory of God, is lifted up, and the prodigal son comes back into the supernatural order, thereby acquires part in God's own life, thus becomes 'adopted son/daughter of God', with all the favors associated with it, more than merely in the sense of co-heir. Co-heir automatically means fellow-participant in the unity, which the son (Christ) enjoys with the Father, according to the parable: *"All that is mine (says God the Father) is yours",* and He does not just say that to the faithful son!
>
> Already now this adopted child, once lost, has part in the divine life of Father, Son and the Holy Spirit; receives the state of grace (special friendship with God), receives the divine virtues of faith, hope and love but also, in a sense, the guarantee that he will always receive all the necessary means to remain in the state of grace, called the graces of assistance. »»

Being a child of God, formulated in Romans 8, is preceded by a discussion of the meaning of baptism (beginning in ch. 6). It says that through baptism we are buried in Christ Jesus in order to share in his power of resurrection. Being buried, where else but in his heart? This leads to Revelation 3:14-22:

> «« These things saith (Jesus Christ), the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God: (…) To him that overcometh will I grant **to sit with Me in my throne**, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. »»

Ticonius, who lived in the fourth century, and who through his writings influenced Augustin, comments on this:

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82) For a baby, the word 'father' is too difficult to pronounce. Mama is phonetically the easiest and then comes papa. Therefore, in most languages, the words mama and papa are the same. (In ancient Japanese, the word for 'mother' is papa. In that language, a child's first babble word, mama, is explained as 'I want food'.)

«« (In the image of the Son) sitting with (the Father), He shows that (He as) the Son participates in the power of the Father. For what else does it mean that He is seated on the throne of the Father than that He is of one and the same substance? For God the Son is powerful, who in the Father is (present) everywhere and by his own power fills the heavens and earth. »»

We can add to this that the throne, the image of God's power and love, is found in God's heart. Our sanctification happens in the sanctuary of the heart. (Jer. 17:9, 24:7; Ez. 18:31, 36:26) The heart contains the CPU (central processing unit) of the personality (Prov. 4:23), for it is the place of the soul but also of its defilement and reconciliation, spiritual suffering and delight. We find a similar view in the primitive Egyptian gnosis that conceived the heart as the seat of the divine presence. The American physician Paul Pearsall summed it up as follows: *"The heart is the maker of the 'gestalt' that we call 'i' and the catalyst of the 'spirit' that we experience as the 'we'."* [83] In brief, the baptised are destined therefore to share in all that belongs to Him. For He says unphatomably: *"I will grant (them) to sit with Me in my throne."* According to Ephesians 3:17, Christ also sits in our hearts in reciprocity, but the question is: Have we given Him the throne there – that our will may be subject to God's will in all things, that his Will may be done?

Being a child of God more deeply defined

We all know the story of the miraculous catch of fish from John: 21:1-14 when 153 fish were caught. Now 153 is equal to 9x17. It is also the sum of the numbers 1 through 17. In Hebrew, the number 17 is the letter value of "children of God" (bnei Ha-Elohim). The 17th time the word 'world' appears in John's first epistle is in 5:4: *"For all that are born of God overcome the world."* According to Romans 8:35-39, there are 17 things that cannot separate us from the Love of Christ: tribulation, distress, persecution, hunger, nakedness, peril of life, the sword, death threat, death, life, angels, evil spirits, what is, what will be, power in the high, power in the deep or any being in the universe. As for the 9 from 9x17, according to Galatians 5:22-23 there are the 9 fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. And in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 Paul lists the 9 gifts of the Spirit: speaking with wisdom, speaking with knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, operation of powers, prophecy, discernment of spirits, knowledge of languages and interpretation of glossolalia. Finally, in Matthew 5:3-12, the 9 Beatitudes are expressed as a result of the fruits of the Spirit. In a nutshell, this more deeply defines being a child of God.

"Biblical Numbers and the Endtime" by J. de Voogt
De Lijster Publisher, Monster # 1997

33 – From brokenness to glory

The guarantee that man will always receive the necessary resources to remain in a state of grace are absolutely necessary, even essential, because man recognizes a law, to use Paul's words, that struggles against the law of sensible thinking and delivers him captive to the tyranny of sin that urges him to do wrong. (Rom. 7:23) It must be admitted: the person, including the believer, is subject to the limitations of his nature. Nobody can escape this. Besides, how often have we mindlessly prayed 'Thy will be

83) "The Heart's Code - Tapping the wisdom and power of our heart energy (the new findings about cellular memories and their role in the mind/body/spirit connection)" by Paul Perseall – Broadway Books, New York # 1998 (end Ch. 3).

done' and stripped the prayer of its power? And yet it is Jesus' prayer, so that we should not doubt that it will be answerede! How are we to imagine that answering, because in my innermost being I discover a law waging war against myself? That is quite some prayer: Thy will be done! Does not the apostle Paul sigh – yes, almost in despair: *"O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"* (Rom. 7:24) I, the searcher, seek God. To do his will: this I strive for. But in my brokenness I fail to do what I want. Paul whispers to us as it were: "despair not". Because, he says: (Rom. 8:19-21)

> «« For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creation was subject to futility (i.e. to the action which is not subject to God's will), not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. »» [84)]

The glory that Paul presents to us is nothing less than the glory in which Adam and Eve were clothed when they walked in God's image and likeness. (Gen. 1:27) It is inconceivable that in that state, that of Paradise, they would not have walked with God in total submission to his Divine Will. Luisa Piccarreta (1865-1947), also called the little daughter of the Divine Will, has written the 'golden booklet' with 31 lessons by the Virgin Mary to arrive at the Divine Will in the creature.[85)] In her 5th lesson or meditation, the following extremely important observation was made, written down from the mouth of the Holy Virgin, addressed in the 7th lesson as *"the Faithful Secretary of the secrets of the Divine Trinity"* :

> «« The creature, with his human will, is all hesitation; it is fragile, unsteady, unruly. This is because God, in the act of creation, **had created it by its nature unified to the Divine Will**: this Divine Will had to be its power, the engine, the support, the food, the life itself of the human will… That explains why, not allowing the Divine Will to guide ours, we push back the gifts received by God at the very moment of Creation [as concerns the individual or the soul] and, concurrently, the natural rights that were received at the moment of being created… »»

The way to finally arrive at walking in the Divine Will, is by means of the willingness to relinquish one's own human will in exchange for the divine one, which then settles in such a person on God's initiative, provided that He deigns Himself to do so.

Since such a thing naturally suits the created human person, there is also the possibility of the opposite: that instead of being possessed by God, a person allows himself to be possessed by another. Indeed, it is striking that parallels can be drawn between the meditations from the 'golden book' and the usual methods that lead to demonic possession. Yes, even hypnosis is a form of possession.[86)] This may surprise you, since most hypnotists insist that the real will of the hypnotized cannot be trumped. But prac-

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84) In Romans 8:19-20, the Greek 'ktisis' is often translated creation, but creature is also permissable and in my view preferable here. The Greek word in Romans 8:20 translated by 'futility' and 'vanity' comes, according to Strong's Concordance, from the Greek word 'matèn' indicating deliberate manipulation and fruitless seeking. Sin from the Hebrew means 'to miss its purpose' or to misunderstand the meaning God has given to something.

85) "La Reine du Ciel dans le Royaume de la Volonté Divine" (The queen of heaven in the kingdom of the Divine Will) by Luisa Piccarreta – Ed. Résiac, Montsûrs, France # 2000 (the Italian manuscript was undersigned May 6 1930).

86) However, one must be careful not to point the finger of blame as if, in the case of possession, the possessed person is always to blame for his miserable condition. A history precedes it, sometimes through no fault of the person directly involved.

tice shows otherwise.[87] Allowing oneself to be manipulated willlessly by others or, conversely, putting oneself in God's place, trying to dominate, are an immense evil, for the human will may only place itself under God. It was created for that purpose. A grandiose mystery!

Fortunately there is hope, for the revelation of the sons of God, which is presented to us in Romans 8, is the restoration of the paradisiacal state, the coming back to walking with God in a state free from all demonic infestation. I have the audicity to think that God's vengeance on the transgression of the commandment, not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, will consist in the fact that the glory of the second state will be immeasurably greater than the first, just as much as Jesus, our firstling, was clothed with greater glory than once Adam. Adam was a material creature subject to destruction - he could die - and he could also sin, but the reborn creatures are born of water and of the spirit, as Jesus explained to Nicodemus. (John 3:5) And as the first John letter teaches us (3:9), **a child of God cannot sin** because the divine germ of life (and God is spirit) remains in him.[88] Upon which I immediately think of *"Thy kingdom come ... as in heaven"* and also Revelation 21:2-4:

> «« Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle (or house) of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, God himself will be with them and be their God. »»

This calls up the notion of the Feast of Tabernacles or Sukkot, which at some future time will have become a Christian feast. (cf. Zech. 14:16) All tears will then be wiped away, not only ours but those of God's image-bearer par excellence, which – despite all its brokenness – has always remained image-bearer. Of course, you understand, by this I mean Israel, now image of the suffering Christ. So there is hope for this earth veiled in darkness.

The Greek word for 'as' in *"as in Heaven"*, in the Lord's Prayer, indicates an equality unless the context indicates otherwise, but that is not the case here. There is very little to be found of this equality on earth. Although the veil between heaven and earth has been torn and the sanctuary can be entered (Heb. 6:19, 10:19, Eph. 2:14-19), the discrepancy remains. Peter also knew this, and yet he admonishes us: Be holy in all your walk 'like' God who called you, for God is holy. (1 Pet. 1:15-16, Lev. 19:2) And doesn't Jesus say at the conclusion of his plea that we must demonstrate a righteousness that is not of this world: *"Be ye therefore 'perfect' as your Father in Heaven is perfect."* (Mt. 5:48)

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87) Gerard Feller says of hypnosis in his booklet "Tussen Waan en Werkelijkheid" (Between Delusion and Reality), Oudewater, Netherlands # 2011 (p. 13): «« During hypnosis, the person's ability to think critically is reduced to such an extent that a 'trance logic' is created, which unconditionally accepts everything that under normal circumstances would be labeled irrational, illogical and contradictory. (...) Hypnosis bridges the will by placing personal responsibility beyond subjective, rational and critical choice. Because normal evaluative abilities are suppressed, impressionability is increased, and rational thinking is reduced, the will is seriously impeded and may ultimately be violated. People can be bound to a person or put under a certain power through hypnosis. (...) That while 1 Corinthians 6:12 says: "I will not be enslaved by anything."

88) The Offertory antiphon of the extraordinary Latin Rite (Tridentine Mass) uses the following words: "Deus, qui humanæ substantiæ dignitatem mirabiliter condidisti, et mirabilius reformasti." (O God, Who in creating man didst exalt his nature wonderfully and yet more wonderfully didst establish it anew.)

The well known author Henri van Praag explains what 'perfect' means from the Hebrew point of view: [89)]

> «« When Jesus says: *"Be perfect like your Father in heavens"*, then for certain He said in Hebrew or Aramaic: be 'tammim'. Christian theology, especially the Calvinistic, has always worked on this text, so that in many places in the Old as well as New Testament, where this term 'perfect' is related to persons, one has tried to soften the expression by terms like faultless or even devout, as with the story of Job. Yet when a combination is found of tsaddik or righteous together with a word that indicates something good, perfect, devout or just, it then deals beyond a shadow of doubt with that specific Jewish couple tsaddik-we-tammim. This is obscured in the book of Job by the translation: *"This man was blameless and upright"*, but in Hebrew it is again the same: 'tsaddik-we-tammim'. »»

This shows that the Hebrew tsaddik-we-tammim (righteous & complete in the uinity with God) is a binomium, a term consisting of two components, like "righteousness & peace", taken from Zechariah 9:9-10 (also Ps. 72:7-8): *"Behold, your king is coming to you, righteous and glorious. He is meek and riding on a donkey, the foal of a beast of burden. He shall speak peace to the nations when about to establish his dominion from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth."*

If the kingdom of God's Will would have arrived immediately after Christ's crucifixion with that God-like holiness and righteousness, Jesus would have prayed the Lord's Prayer in this vein: 'My Father, may your kingdom, which I am now about to establish, be confirmed on earth, and may our Will prevail.' But Jesus spoke in the form of a promise translated as *"that Thou Kingdom may come",* meaning that it has yet to happen and that Christians have to wait for it with the same certainty with which Israel awaited its future Saviour. It is for this reason that Revelation 21 talks of a future laying ahead in which the Holy City descends from heaven, to take up residence here on earth.

I now quote from Piccarreta's work from her dictation of April 28, 1923, found in "The Kingdom of the Divine Fiat in the Midst of Creatures", also called "The Book of Heaven":

> «« It is true that I (Jesus) came upon earth to redeem Man, but my primary purpose was that the Divine Will might triumph over the human will by bringing these two wills into harmony and unity, by bringing the human will into that Will which it had abandoned. This was the main offense that my Celestial Father received from Man, and I was to compensate Him for it, otherwise I would not give Him full satisfaction. But in order to obtain the first purpose, first I had to issue the second – that is, to save him, to give him my hand since he had fallen, to wash him of the mud in which he was lying. How could I say: *"Come and live in my Will",* if he was horrid to look at, and was under the slavery of the infernal enemy? **Therefore, after having obtained the second purpose, I wanted to secure the first one – that my Will be done on earth as It is in Heaven, and that Man, who had gone out of my Will, enter into Mine once again.** And in order to obtain this, I give to this first creature all my merits, all my works and steps, my palpitating Heart, my Wounds, my Blood – my whole Humanity, to dispose her, to prepare her, to let her enter into my Will. In fact, first she must take the complete fruit of my Redemption, and then, as though in triumph, enter the possession of the immense sea of my Supreme

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89) Article by Henri van Praag in "PRANA" no. 54, 1988 - translated from Dutch. Naphthali ben Levi (Henri) from Praag (1916-1988) was a well-known Jewish-Dutch philosopher and religious historian, who also established a name as a therapist and publicist in the fields of psychology and parapsychology.

Will. I do not want her to enter as a stranger, but as a daughter; not in poverty, but in richness; not ugly, but beautiful, as if she were another Me. Therefore, I want to concentrate my whole life in you – as in any man. »»

34 – A sovereign work of God

The perfection that will be achieved in the Divine Will, towards which we ought to strive, is unreachable except by divine initiative. In fact, the tabernacle comes down from heaven. One of the most noteworthy points of this perfection is that it is a sovereign work of God – begun, undertaken and accomplished by God in the soul, through which He creates a holiness that can no longer be called human but only divine, and whereby humankind here on earth becomes a true child of God, in the meaning of the adult human being, assembled in Christ. Yes, only God's essence, that crosses all boundaries between the human and the divine, is capable of uniting the human soul to the sanctifying infinity of the divine. Paul recognizes the overriding importance of God's initiative, as he says in his letter to the Philippians (2:13): *"For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for his good pleasure."* Does Isaiah not say (26:12): *"For You have also done all our works in us.*" And Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians (2:20): *"It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."*

Bonded in freedom

All seminal philosophers have in common the desire to be autonomous in their thinking, utterly bondless. Immanuel Kant started his thinking with this assertion: *"Our consciousness brings about the forms of contemplation and thought."* In the modern West, free will is misinterpreted. There, the freedom given by God the Father has degenerated into bondlessness, into absolute self-determination and immorality on the inescapable path toward satanic bonding and hopelessness. Autonomous thought and action is a fiction. As a pure abstraction, indeed as a self-contained thing, it is conceivable but non-existent.

It would be wrong to suppose that this takes place without an emptying and willingness on the part of the receiver, since God always respects the person. The most essential condition for receiving is that the self be divested. This is a work of grace that moves the soul to empty itself of all obstacles deriving from its lapsed nature, such as evil tendencies and passions, which prevent a total dedication to God. This is expressed in the conditions that God imposed on the Levitical priesthood: *"The priests, the Levites – all the tribe of Levi – shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel (...) Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their brethren; the Lord is their inheritance (and not something else)."* (Deut. 18:1-2) Although Christ already dwells in his children now, as with Paul at the time, that indwelling is not yet such that one can speak of the revelation of the sons of God. But the beginning is there and from that reality Christians live in the joyful expectation of a much greater effect. Still at the kindergarten stage, we are on our way to become the mature man.

When Jesus says (Jn. 15:5): *"Without me, you can do nothing",* He invites us to deliver ourselves up to his divine activity within us, like tendrils on the vine. The tendrils on the vine, those are us, have been grafted on the tree, that is Jesus Christ. In its most extreme interpretation this parable indicates, for a time that is still awaiting its fulfilment, that a form of holiness comes into being whereby no further action is taken by our own pious wishes and judgment. Then everything will be fed through Jesus – just as Jesus is fed by the Father in a divine economy that, not coincidentally, is addressed in the previous chapter: *"The Father who dwells in me does the works."* (Jn. 14:10)

Because Jesus Christ is no longer on earth in his human body, the feeding of the vines takes place through the Holy Spirit that the Father has sent at Jesus' request. (John 14:16-20) This is put into words as follows: *"At that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in Me and I in you."* And Paul agrees with this when he explains: *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."* (Rom. 8:14).

35 – The least of these is greater than John

What we observe in ourselves and around us in the Christian life is no more than a shadow of what the Bible promises. On a personal level there are fine examples to be quoted from here and there, but in a larger context it is a sad picture indeed. I It is not difficult to establish that by far the majority of Christian holiness is rather a mixture of righteousness according to the law of outward appearances and of righteousness of faith. (Phil. 3:9) Are you so proud of two thousand years of Christianity? No way! The fact that the way this is formulated is a piece of literary styling by way of a 'lesson for use and amusement' I refuse to accept. I'm a fairly simple person, a so-called 'retro': I believe what it says in the Bible. When reality fails to agree, it is clearly a prophetic witness awaiting its own future, a beautiful future we can look forward to. At that time, our good works, our deeds and actions will no longer be simply human, but will be imbued with the divine, resulting from Christ living in us. Such a person in whom Christ lives has become a new creature, a son (or child) of God. *"Old things have passed away: behold, all things have become new."* (2 Cor. 5:17) Regarding human righteousness, none was greater than John the Baptist, whose sanctity exceeded even that of Enoch. (Gen. 5:24) But Jesus adds: *"But he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."* (Mat. 11:11, Luke. 7:28) Here it is not a question of 'in heaven', but 'of heaven', therefore here on earth. We pray *"Thy kingdom come."* Hence the kingdom is not yet present but in the future tense.

That which is least in the kingdom is apparently something that still awaits its fulfilment. This fits with the first letter of John (4:9-10), which states that God sent his Son so that we might live from Him, to which is subtly added that this is not because we loved God, but because He first loved us. It echoes Paul's teaching that *"the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit."* (Rom. 5:5) It is clear that only the love that comes from God is the sole and exclusive source of true holiness. It follows from this that we must love, not with our own limited human love but with the divine love that God pours into our hearts, not just once but rather as an ever-flowing stream, so that streams of living water flow from within us for everyone's welfare. (John 7:38) That fits with the Hebrew meaning of the word 'soul' (nefesh/nafesha) that according to the "Self Defining Hebrew" or SDH System implies a 'flowing out'.

36 – From fullness to fullness

Paul makes clear that the absolute fullness of God lives in Christ. (Col. 1:19) I place special emphasis on God's 'whole' fullness that lives in Jesus' incarnation (Col. 2:9), which shows that there is nothing in God that is not also in the incarnated Jesus. This truth is too easily missed in our reading, and actually exceeds our power of imagination. How can the limited – that is, a human body – contain the unlimited? How can the created humanity of Jesus be capable of including in itself the entire reality of God? The problem now starts to give us an idea of God's infinity. Although beyond our imagination, we can draw conclusions from the truth that Paul had in mind in these two verses, the principal one being that we must restrain ourselves from placing restrictions on the extent to which our own human nature can contain God. The unlimited capacity of the soul to be filled with God is perhaps best reflected in Paul's prayer for

the Ephesians (3:19): *"To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."*

Although there are several texts showing a gradation of donation, it should be emphasized that nowhere does Scripture impose restrictions on our growth in God. On the contrary, many texts indicate that God wants to give us all that He himself possesses. If our forerunner, Jesus, is the gift of God, and if a total fullness exists in Jesus, then Paul can rightly ask: *"He who did not spare his own Son (...) shall He not with Him freely give us all things?"* (Rom. 8:32) And when John the Baptist explains that *"of his fullness we have all received, and grace for grace"* (Jn. 1:16), then that indicates that there is a stable and unlimited reception of God's fullness in a line that can be drawn from the old dispensation to be extended far into the endless future. This is echoed in the parable of the prodigal son: *"Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours."* (Luke 15:31 and Rom. 8:17) Why put limits on God infinite mercy? All He has is ours, that He may be glorified in us! (John 17:10) We must therefore conclude that not only is there no predetermined limit on what God gives us, but that the ability of a person to receive God grows freely and thus indefinitely. Therefore the New Testament dispensation, the time in which we live, may absolutely not be a thumbstick whereby we measure what God has prepared for a more distant future of humankind. Isaiah's outburst is still topical (64:4): *"Men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, nor has the eye seen any God besides you, Who acts for the one who waits for Him."*

37 – The transcendent inner life 'in' the Trinity

Essentially, the complete fusion of the human will with God's together with an unlimited growth potential mean that Man, through the sons of God, will be deified 'within' God, which fits with a well-known axiom of Thomas Aquinas that postulates that the unreceived act is infinite but the received act is finite.[90)] This should be understood in the sense that that God's infinity does not mean that his perfection remains always incomplete, but rather that He is the possessor of all realized and unrealized perfections. Because the unseeable and immaterial God is his own act of existing, his being is unlimited. Giving an act to (a transfer) implies that the receiver necessarily did not yet possess the act. Thus, every essence 'outside' God is a receiver of a power of act, or potency, which is limited in itself, for the act itself is not possessive of all perfections. After all, by receiving their existence or the act from out of God, they are not their own act of existing. Even so, **the 'existence' or the 'act' is infinite in its potential if 'within' God, whether received or unreceived**, and it becomes finite only when it is enveloped with limited potency and is then also 'outside' God. John Wippel says in his article (p. 558):

> «« We have seen from various passages that, according to Thomas's thinking, the act, especially the act of being, is (in itself) not self-limiting. It is not enough to appeal to an extrinsic principle or cause to account for the intrinsic limitation within a finite entity of that which is not self-Uniting. Therefore, Thomas would conclude to the need for an intrinsic principle therein that receives and limits its act of being. »» [91)]

As Luisa Piccarreta tells on August 12, 1904: *"Meanwhile He (Jesus) told me: Courage my daughter, don't you see how the thread of my Will binds you completely inside of Me? So, if any other will wants to bind you, if it is not holy it cannot, because since you*

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90) "Thomas Aquinas and the axiom that unreceived act is unlimited" by John F. Wippel – The Review of Metaphysics 51-3, The Catholic University of America, Washington DC # March 1998 (pp. 533-64).

are inside of Me, if it is not holy it cannot enter into Me." Johan Wippel explains in his discussion of Thomas Aquinas (ibid pp. 540, 542, 563):

> «« That which has an esse [act of being] that is unrestricted [absolutum] and which is not received in anything else, indeed which is identical with its act of being, is infinite without qualification. (…) One of his arguments runs this way. Every act that inheres in something else receives its limitation [terminationem] from that in which it is present. (…) In commenting on proposition 4 of the "Liber de causis" he remarks that if something should possess the infinite power of being in such a way that it did not participate 'esse' (life force) from something else, it alone would be infinite. »»

To become God out of His own nature

When the desire for the experience of union with God is such that it leads to contempt of self and a seeking for God in all things, not only by an appreciation of the mind, but by the dispositions of the heart, then it evolves into love and charity. When this pure love is strong it leads to unity of spirit. A person who arrives at this state wills only what God wills, and in doing so takes on the likeness to God: And this is the perfection of man, likeness to God. Not to desire to be perfect is to sin! (...) This is called unity of spirit not only because the Holy Spirit brings it about, or because He affects the human spirit, but because charity itself is God the Holy Spirit. (...) When the conscience finds itself as it were in the middle of the embrace and kiss of the Father and the Son, then in some ineffable and unthinkable way this man deserves grace, not to be God Himself, but rather that which is due to him out of His own nature.

The Abbot William of St Thierry (±1077-1148)
"The Golden Epistle" (II.16 PL 184: 348, 349)

It follows that the distinction between a recipient 'inside' or 'outside' God and its related potencies is of prime importance. It also follows that God is more than any of his creations or creatures, which in their nature are confined to boundaries or by 'iron' laws. God, however, can at any time from within Himself, i.e. autonomously, 'stretch' the potency of a recipient outside Him, if God's attributes permit, such as those of his love and justice.[92)] God is always obedient to his Attributes, which is a constraint of a different kind, because the Attributes always remain true to themselves. Otherwise God did not 'have to' send his only begotten Son as an appropriation for sins. Commonly the respect that God's Attributes owe to themselves is overlooked in the discussion of divine Omnipotence, and it's precisely on this account that Lucifer fancied himself to be in a position to outwit God.

It is not too difficult to understand why the unlimited growth potential that will be given to us in the FIAT VOLUNTAS TUA is the criterion for divinisation, which object is completely out of reach for created beings, unless being given. The transcendent inner life 'in' the Trinity is being offered to Man as a free gift. Be it as it is,

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91) Infinities for certain qualities in creation or the creature are therefore acceptable. In our world, for instance, numbers and space are endless, as well as time (or the foundation of it). The human soul also possesses infinity in time, because she is immortal: a fundamental point of faith! As a pure spiritual substance, independent of form, she also has a boundless 'capacity' to receive, which does not revert to saying that she is also 'deserving' to receive. The one limits the other. Only the perfected soul will be allowed to receive continually, something we eagerly await. This perfecting will be an act of God, though not without the soul's agreement.

how can this divinisation be compatable with 'not' being equal to God? That can only be explained by a substraction of the infinite, a concept discovered by the mathematician Georg Cantor (1845-1918), *"the master anatomist of the infinite",* as professor Charles Seife used to say. For our problem on God's being we use the mathmatical language because that is the language of infinity: essentially, a row of numbers never ends. Cantor explains that two sets of numbers are the same size when one set can 'sit' on top of the other, with no number left over, which Aquinas calls, if it concerns God (in fact an endless row), the *"subsisting esse"*. (ibid pp. 545, 558) For instance: consider a set of three numbers: [1, 2, 3]. It is the same size as: [12, 31, 44], because the second set also consists of three numbers. Both number-sets occupy each other; each number of the first set is 'seated', as it were, on a number of the second set, with none left. Things get interesting when considering infinite sets. Take for instance: [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.] and a second set, also infinite: [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.]. Obviously they sit on each other. But what happens if we take away, say, the first number (the one) from the second one, the subset? But if so desired many more numbers can be deleted. That does not change the seating potential, because the second set now starts with the number two: [2, 3, 4, 5, 6, etc.] and remains infinite, and thus all numbers of both new sets occupy each other too. Actually, this is a definition of the infinite: something that stays the same size, even if you substract something from it, or even a whole series. And the strange thing is that the infinitive subset is as large as the original infinitive set.

Cantor identified the absolute infinity with God, the God of the infinitely small and the infinitely large. He believed his theory of transfinite numbers had been directly communicated to him by God. The objections to his work were occasionally fierce: Henri Poincaré referred to Cantor's ideas as *"a grave disease"* infecting the discipline of mathematics. David Hilbert defended it from its critics by declaring: *"No one shall expel us from the Paradise Cantor has created."* Today, Cantor's ideas are generally accepted and he is considered as the father of the set theory, which occupies an important place in modern mathematics.

To elaborate Cantor's ideas we can image that the numbers 1, 2, and 3 belong to the Holy Trinity, and that the higher numbers in endless succession belong to the saints that have been clothed by Christ and are thus being part of God's dissociated personalities. I refer to "Das Fischernetz" (the net with 153 fishes that figures in John 21:11) by Adrienne von Speyr (1902-1967), where she explains that the great missions of Saints are indivisible, like the prime numbers. For example, Saint Peter stands for 151, Saint Paul for 13 and the Virgin Mary for 5.[93)] She extensively analyses the number 153, the sum of holiness of the Church, seen from the perspective of prime numbers. Prime numbers consist of an endless series and all natural not-prime-numbers are mere repetitions of prime numbers and are therefore not fundamental,[94)] which explains why in the sum of holiness the not-prime-numbers are skipped.

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92) God is Love, God is of a perfect morality, He is justice and possesses eternal life. These attributes are more or less within the human confines. The other, those of sovereignty (no need to render account), omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence and immutability (in God's nature and Attributes), those are rather contradictions to the human potential, though they have come nearer in Christ. It is in the first four Attributes that the Jewish people may be a witness, to which a fifth has been added, that of the Merciful Father. (cf. message to J.N.S.R. of 24-10-2009) In Jesus Christ, the God-human, the Attribute of Infinite Mercy has been appropriated, unhindered by dvine justice. No single Attribute can contradict another, because the balance of the whole universe rests on it.

93) "Erster Blick auf Adrienne von Speyr" (First look at Adrienne of Speyr) by Cardinal Hans Urs von Balthasar - Johannes Verlag, Einsiedln CH # 1968 (pp. 72-74).

38 – The Apotheosis

Every word of the high priestly prayer that Jesus prayed on the eve of his suffering on the Cross, is written in letters of flame. They are God's jewels intended for the heirs. If we extend the line of Jesus' high priestly prayer, in which He prays for his descendents that they may be perfectly one with Him and the Father as He is one in the Father and the Father in Him (John 17:21-23), we can see that God seeks so to have the individual soul melt in the fire of his Love that in this intimate union the will of man is his will and all the desires and thoughts of man go in the direction of God's desires and thoughts. John defines this intimacy as staying in the womb of the Father. (John 1:18) Paul puts it succinctly by saying that anyone who adheres to God is one spirit with Him. (1 Cor. 6:17) Only in light of the foregoing does this message of J.N.S.R. become comprehensible:

> «« God is going to touch every spirit. The Holy Spirit will gather, gather all the children of God to make them recognize their identity. It is God the Holy Spirit who reconstitutes Himself and gathers in ONE: God and his children who follow Him (…) Everything must happen between two opposing forces. God with his Own People will win! God recomposes Himself and calls all his children: Heaven and Earth are united. See you soon. God, who unites the Alpha and the Omega. »» (message of Juli 30, 2007)

This may well be a consistent exegesis, but that does not mean that the undersigned can make for himself an accurate representation of what that 'will' really mean, what the future will look like: for though I can see the snowdrop flowers and can enjoy them, yet the trees and plants are still bare. What if these last two thousand years were the early spring for a new beginning - not again, but NEW - or, to put it in musical terms, the prelude leading to a thunderous apotheosis? John interprets the apotheosis as follows: *"Everyone who abides in Him does not sin."* (1 John. 3:6) And he declares: *"Everyone who is born of God does not sin, because the seed (God) remains in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."* (1 John. 3:9) Yes, God has a great future in store for this troubled world in which eternity counts more than the present.

This article is partially based on an unpublished writing from 1999 by Canadian Father Andrew Miles OSB. It is still unpublished, as far as I know.

An extremely interesting catechesis, which touches on our subject, is recorded at the end of the book by J.N.S.R. in "Mon dernier pas avec DIEU - Avant une terre nouvelle (Evangile de Marie)" or, "My last step with GOD - before a New Earth begins (Gospel of Mary)." Messages from Heaven from November 27, 2009 to June 12, 2010. This is the fourth and final part of this catechesis (starting on p. 228) that deals with the real meaning of being a child of God, which, according to 1 Corinthians 2:9, is beyond anyone's comprehension. And that now will be revealed at Christ's return.

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94) A prime number can only be divided by one and by itself. According to this definition the number one is the first prime number. The convention to exclude one is wrong, as 1=1x1, 2=1x2, 13=1x13. A not-prime-number is 14=1x2x7, while 28=1x2x2x7. One is excluded because it is said that -1 x -1 = +1, but -1 is a negative integer and it is therefore not a valid multiplication number in order to determine a prime number, the more so because each natural number is mirrored by its own negative integer (-1 times -x = +x). Those sets are separated by their common pivot called zero. This zero is in fact not a number but a dividing line and has an essentially different numerical function than the zero in, say, the number 10. A baby is not zero years old but is a number of hours or a number of days. The natural numbers and the negative integers are strictly speaking two different sets of numbers. The fact that they can be drawn on one axis and permutated with each other is beyond the question, for indeed those two sets have common characteristics, but yet they remain different sets.

APPENDIX 14

GROUP-THINK BY MEANS OF HYPNOTIC CONNECTIVITY

Groupthink is seen in optima forma in a flock of birds or a school of fish controlled as if by an invisible hand. It's something called swarm intelligence. If you watch all those birds flying together, there is not a single bird who coordinates. They move together as a unit that is closely knit. They have a kind of telepathic bond, so as to react as one body. Fascinating. Adrea Cavagna, Alssio Cimmarelli and Irene Gieardina and Massimiliano Viale have tried to address the issue by means of scale-free mathematics, as propounded in their scientific article "Scale-free correlations in starling flocks" # 2010 (PNAS), from which the following excerpt:

> «« These behavioral correlations are scale free: 'the change in the behavioral state of one animal affects and is affected by that of all other animals in the group, no matter how large the group is.' Scale-free correlations provide each animal with an effective perception range much larger than the direct inter-individual interaction range, thus enhancing global response to perturbations. (…) Of all distinctive traits of collective animal behavior the most conspicuous is the emergence of global order, namely the fact that all individuals within the group synchronize to some extent their behavioral state. In many cases global ordering amounts to an alignment of the individual directions of motion, as in bird flocks, fish schools, mammal herds, and in some insect swarms. Yet, global ordering can affect also other behavioral states, as it happens with the synchronous flashing of tropical fireflies or the synchronous clapping in human crowds. The presence of order within an animal group is easy to detect. However, order may have radically different origins, and discovering what is the underlying coordination mechanism is not straightforward. (…) The remarkable thing about a flock of birds is not merely the globally ordered motion of the group, but the way the flock dodges a falcon's attack. Collective response is the trademark of self-organized order as opposed to a centralized one [in which the leader directs each individual independently]. »» (Copyright © 2025 National Academy of Sciences)

What is it that keeps these birds together and makes them effortlessly work together? What is it that forms such a thing as a culture (a different kind of swarm), so that we can speak of a German culture, which is very different from the French culture, and the two in turn are very different from the English, while within each of these groups the composition is in each case very varied, certainly as far as genetics are concerned. Is not it a strange thing that on the basis of a sample of two thousand people the opinion of population of millions can be very accurately probed? There is also such a thing as coincidence, which Arthur Koestler has written about. If we look at the number of people in the metropolis of New York who are bitten by a dog requiring hospital treatment, the numbers appear to be remarkably stable from year to year. And what about an Arctic fox diving down into meter-deep snow and coming up with a marmot in its mouth? The snow is so thick that sensory perception is out of the question! What is it that binds two people together so that one can speak of a telepathic union? Joost van den Vondel poems in the Gijsbrecht van Aemstel (verses 1239-1286): *"Where was truer fidelity than between man and woman in the world ever found, two souls glowingly forged together or fastened and joined in loves and sorrows?"* Leo Tolstoy married Sonya in 1862, but first he was engaged to her much older sister. Then one day he was sitting with Sonya at his dacha (country house) and he carved some letters in the table

and she immediately knew how to tell which words those letters represented (each time a first letter of a word). Especially lately, computers are being used to set up many telepathic experiments between subjects: such as two rats or humans, from which striking samples of telepathy emerge. And what about two plants from which two cuttings are planted under equal conditions in another greenhouse. What turns out: if one plant is regularly 'tortured' with a burning cigarette, the corresponding cutting starts to grow worse!

What is the denominator that connects all this? There are many names for the different facets that fall under this management process, but it is basically one medium or acting force that manifests itself in different ways. We might call it telepathy. Thought transference or telepathy deals with the transfer of information from the mind of one person to that of another without the use of sensory channels or physical interaction. In my opinion, a better term is 'hypnotic connectivity', but according to a broader definition than we are used to so far. This medium not only provides coordination between individuals, but also coordinates the unimaginably complicated machinery of our brain so that it can function as a unit.

During hypnosis, the person's ability to think critically is reduced to a greater or lesser degree so that a 'trance logic' emerges, accepting what under normal circumstances would be labeled irrational, illogical and contradictory. Hypnosis knows its reasons that reason does not know. Trance-logic also implies that unconscious processes take over. A professional tennis player does not know how he hits the ball, only that he hits it. As it were, he looks at himself as if he were sitting in the stands and observes how he himself moves. Hypnotic connectivity transcends the slow-thinking conscious mind that can only concern itself with very few things at a time. Under hypnosis, action and thought are placed beyond the subjective, rational and critical choice, making possible multi-faceted coordination for which even modern computers cannot compete. We can draw a parallel with the cells in our bodies. As emerges with athletic performance, the body's cells can interact in a wonderfully coordinated way to the point of sometimes the unbelievable. Take, for instance, how footballer Cristiano Ronaldo handles the ball. The classic view that the brain sends signals that drive that concerted action is completely inadequate, because it does not answer how the will translates into an action and how that harmonious unconscious interplay is created in detail. Somehow the cells, which probably also have a primitive individual consciousness, are completely obedient in such an athletic performance. Our body cells 'know' they are part of our body and listen to our intention which transcends a purely biochemical reaction. There are people who pierce themselves with pins and suffer no harm, such as was the case with the Rotterdammer Arnold Henskens, who called himself Mirin Dajo and died in 1948. His case has been scientifically verified.

The process of human thought through the brain represents a universe in itself that is not inferior to the complexity of the physical universe. It is an ode to the Maker of it all, who called each of us into existence out of Love, an act of creation that in humble amazement deserves our respect. It has been discovered that deep within a person, the brain truly understands in a pure awareness all about himself. This is true for everyone. This pure awareness has been given various names, including 'hidden observer'. If a man is obnoxious and seems to have a total lack of awareness that he irritates people, just know that deep down an awareness realizes exactly what he is and what he does. The multiple conscious brain, hiding in the recesses of our subconscious, knows deep down what is happening. A name to remember is Milton H. Erickson (1901-1980). He has done rigorous scientific explorations regarding the nature of hypnosis. He was a

prolific writer focusing primarily on case studies and experimental work, which has greatly advanced the general understanding of hypnosis of which self-hypnosis plays a part. One of his famous quotes is: *"The unconscious mind is made up of all your learnings over a lifetime, many of which you have [consciously] forgotten, but which serve you in your automatic functioning."* It was Erickson's perspective that hypnosis provided a tool with which to communicate with the unconscious mind and access the immense reservoir of resources held within. He was also the first who formalized that the unconscious mind is incapable to grasp the linguistic negative. Someone addicted to smoking who says to himself: "I don't want to smoke", reinforces his desire to smoke; parents, rather than telling their child "Don't fall", should advise: "Be careful".

We may say that the body cells, or in extension the individuals belonging to a group, have a relational bond, and that through thinking they consciously and unconsciously, are obedient/responsive to the collectivity to which they belong. Those two factors (relationship and responsiveness) can also explain how Christians function in the body of Christ and how during a social gathering crowds agitate. That all those individuals in a crowd stick together like loose sand and would act entirely independent is not supported by the facts. It speaks for itself that once a telepathic or hypnotic connection has been established between two individuals, and this has now been conclusively been demonstrated, it is logical to assume that this need not be limited to two individuals. Experiments with two people who simultaneously hypnotize each other, have found that they enter a shared world in which they do not have to verbally speak to communicate. If two, why not three, four or a hundredfold, even a thousandfold?

The saying of Herman Melville, the writer of the famous novel Moby-Dick, can be applied to couples, as well as to a greater community: *"We cannot live only for ourselves; a thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men; and along these fibers, as sympathetic threads, our actions run as causes, and they come back to us as effects."* The supreme unity of synchronized thinking and feeling is one-to-one, but why should it be restricted to that? The conceptual basis of one-to-one is found in Genesis 2:24, where God says of the intercourse of Adam and Eve: *"That is why a man shall leave his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh."* And what has once been cleaved may not, according to the divine commandment, be cleaved (split) during this earthly life. They are, ideally, riveted together, and are kind of vulcanized to each other in one whole, which of course also includes the spiritual aspect. They will be, as it were, of one thought, knowing the needs and wishes of the other before being expressed. When Adam received his other half, the unity of the first Man is emphasized. This unity was in the image of likeness to God, which consisted for them of a lovingly and all-encompassing unity in thinking, feeling and doing, not only between both of them, but also between the sublime couple and God. Because of this supreme unity the couple may be rightly called divine. Here again we see that the spiritual world mirrors the physical world. The Artscroll Tanach Series, on Genesis 2:24: *"Only in partnership do the two form a complete human being and let them once again be as Adam and Eve originally were: of one body [because Eve was taken from Adam's rib]."* John Gills Commentary comments on this verse: *"In the translations of the Targum of Jonathan, and those of the Septuagint and Samaritan versions, the union between man and woman is so close, as if they were but one person, one soul, one body."* This is why 'him' in Psalm 8:6 refers to them both: *"You have made 'him' rulers over the works of your hands."* John Gills continues: *"in order to produce a legitimate offspring, partaking of the same one flesh, as children do of their parents; without being able to distinguish the flesh of the one from the other, they partake of: and from hence it appears to be a fabulous notion."* Here we see the synchronisation of the mind projec-

ted into group-think and the substantiation of the idea that, here on earth, we all belong to one family and that all wars are fratricidal wars.

I now want to turn our attention to the letter to the Ephesians 5:21: *"Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives be subject to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, his body, and is Himself its savior."* Here, Paul is describing marriage as a mystery, as a sacrament meant to reflect Christ's relation to his body the Church; and the Church are all those who belong to Him. Elsewhere Paul says: *"For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's."* (Rom. 14:7-8) What has been told above about the synchronisation of the mind applies therefore as well to our relation to Jesus Christ, because all who belong to Christ form his body of which He is the head, as defined in 1 Corinthians 12:12–14: *"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many."* This is best illustrated when the priest ends the Eucharistic prayer: *"Through Him (Christ) and with Him and in Him shall your Name be praised, Lord our God, Almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, here and now and forever."* This is in line with the high priestly prayer: *"That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You. (...) The glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me. Yeah, that they may be made perfect in one."* (John 17:21-23) This is an incredibly penetrating prayer, showing the riches that the Father has in store for us and makes us comprehend why Lucifer is so jealous of us and wants no less than our demise.

A question: what is the decisive characteristic of the three persons of the Holy Trinity? It is through the unison of the Will that multiple divine persons are one, and why shouldn't we call that hypnotic connectivity, the medium through which dissociated entities or personalities act as one. Of course it is an action of the Holy Spirit, but that is a very general characterization and therefore says little. Now we also understand that speaking in tongues and prophecies and the like is secondary to being filled with the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 13), for the important thing is the agreement of both wills when being filled with the Holy Spirit. All who are inscribed in the Book of Life are destined to be added to God's three dissociated personalities that in some time in future will be a hive of thousands if not millions of dissociated personalities. A higher form of holiness, of being added to the Holy Trinity, is unthinkable — through Him, with Him and in Him will then have become a reality.

It is being enslaved to God, characterized by uniformity to God's will, which is essential. However, it is by free will that man is allowed to deviate from God's will, not a little, but even to such an extent that it directly contradicts the supreme good that God has in mind. In each one's manifestation, the three divine persons are differentiated. That is the crucial distinction. To illustrate, in God the Father there is no sequentiality because all times are displayed before Him in one glance, but the sequentiality does exist in God the Son who was born 'before' all things (Col. 1:15-19). The word before indicates sequentiality. And that explains that not all details need to be known by Jesus as far as the future is concerned, while future events have no secrets for the Father, so it is possible for some aspects of them to remain hidden from the Son, as for instance the exact date of Jesus' glorious Second Coming (BOT Apr. 1, 2013).

Being one with God, as the high priestly prayer indicates, means that man is deprived of his free will. God has free will only insofar as He chooses one thing or another without the choice implicating a moral aspect. For example, God could have chosen to forgo the creation of the universe and its inhabitants. In other respects, the three divine persons have no free will because doing so would negate perfection. But even if a man in this netherworld wants to follow God in everything, he falls short of this by virtue of three things that he possess sufficiently in his present condition: wisdom (knowing without knowing why), intellectual and spiritual insight (knowing why) and pure knowledge (such as the knowledge in an encyclopedia), and these three are taken on the leash of our inherited tendencies by which we may strive for the good but are absolutely incapable of doing so. A consolation, God is willing to overlook our wrong-doings if there is reason to do so, but this we are not going to discuss.

Wanting to surrender one's free will, which makes one enslaved to God, is so important that the word slave is used about 150 times in the New Testament in one form or another: 130 times the Greek word doulos itself, and then sundoulos, and the verb form, douloō. Though doulos means slave and no other thing than slave, it is often translated with servant in spite of the fact that there are in the New Testament six words for servant: hupēretēs, diakonos, pais, things like that. These all refer to servant but not in the sense of slave. Paul calls himself a slave of Jesus Christ. (Rom. 1:1) In Philippians, also the first verse, he identifies himself again this way, but now with his companion Timothy, and elsewhere in Colossians 4:12. Paul is a slave, Timothy is a slave, Epaphras is a slave, James is a slave, Jude is a slave, Peter is a slave, John is a slave. Again and again. They lived in a world of terrible slavery and yet wanted to be called Christ's slaves. Even in Revelation 22:3, in a description of Heaven: *"There shall no longer be any curse; the throne of God, the Lamb, shall be in it, and his slaves shall serve Him."* Slaves in the past, slaves in the present, slaves in the future; we are inevitably and always slaves. A black pastor may stand up, and say: "How am I going to tell my people that the dominant New Testament metaphor for our relationship to Christ is that of a slave?" The answer is, because we have the benevolent pastor who has given his life for us; he is no master in the usual sense of the word, but nonetheless we are meant to be his slaves. (Mt. 12:50, Mk. 3:34-35, Lk. 8:21, Hebr. 2:11-13, Rom. 8:29) In Roman times no follower of any deity ever called himself a slave of his god. The Greeks referred to their relationship as philos, not doulos. Philos means friend – they were a friend to the god whose friendship they had acquired by means of gifts. We Christians, however are slaves that were bought with a price and thus we are not our own. (1 Cor. 6:19-20) Yet, besides we are also God's friends. (John 15:15) We are meant to be the slave of someone who died the most despicable death imaginable, and of that particular person, less than a worm (in human terms), we want to be called slave and to do his will. Therefore, God is not ashamed to call us brethern. We are slave, uniquely, by giving up our free will, the greatest gift that God bestowed on us at our birth. In all other respects we will have become partakers of God's household.

Here is a beautiful prayer to surrender our free will to God, a prayer that can be prayed daily so we may grow into the mature man God has in mind of us, and which was given to us by Soeur Claire Gagné c.s.j. from Canada:

> «« Spirit of holiness, Spirit of blessing pour out on me. Penetrate and overwhelm all my mind, all my imagination, all my memory and all my brain. Destroy there all causes of confusion. Spirit of holiness, Spirit of blessing, come upon me. Penetrate my will and overwhelm it utterly. Destroy there all causes of rigidity. Spirit of blessing, penetrate the depths of my heart. Heal there every wound and remove there all sensations that do not belong to You. Spirit of

> blessing, pour You out on me and possess all my body. Permeate my internal organs, my nervous system, my breathing, my glands, muscles and bones. »»

Giving up our free will to be enslaved has always intrigued Lucifer, because he wants to appropriate that human potential for himself, when it is destined to transfigure into a love relationship with God. The ultimate secret of Satanic movements throughout the ages is to enslave humans in bondage to the cruel Hell monster. One speaks of a pact with the devil in which a person sells his soul, but the soul is not for sale. However, one can be enslaved voluntarily and that can even happen unvoluntarily. Such a slave can always be freed again, though this is sometimes extremely difficult because there is a pre-history involved. For what has been built up over years cannot be easily undone. Brice Taylor published a book about this in 1999 “Thanks for the MEMORIES - the memoirs of a mind-controlled slave”, in which she recounts:

> «« The minister ushered me into his office and after I confessed that I had been severely abused as a child, had Multiple Personality Disorder, had been forced to participate in Satanic rituals where infants, children, and animals were killed – and as I went on and on – he looked at me in horror, and said: *“Get down on your knees, and ask God to forgive you of your transgressions. You are a sinner.”* The moment my knees hit the floor, Jesus appeared to me and said: *“Get up off your knees, and leave. You my child are innocent, you have done nothing wrong.”* Taking the authority of the Lord, over this human who stood ministering in his name, I did as commanded and left. I couldn’t understand yet what Jesus was trying to help me understand. It took time for Him to reassure me that those acts, committed in a programmed state, acting from other person’s commands and not from my own free will, were not my sin. In the days that followed, Jesus showed me that He wanted me to stand in the name of Mercy for others who had been similarly tortured and abused. »»

Brice Taylor (1951-), born Susan Eckhart, was a so-called monarch-slave, of which there are many millions on earth today. In a hypnotic state, these types of slaves perform tasks, which can be triggered by certain signals, such as finger snapping, as well as a code such as NB15, taking them from the conscious state into the trance of a trained personality. After accomplished task, which is performed in a totally will-less condition, the individual returns to the normal conscious state, which differs in nothing from their fellow human beings in which a memory of what had just happened is totally wiped out. They may have flashbacks of what really happened, and when that happens, their built-in suicide program is activated, which sometimes fails. Otherwise Bruce Taylor would not have been able to give her testimony. Programming, preferably begins when the human robot (so they are thought of) is still in the crib. What is striking about very small children is that their world is exclusively a kind of dream and fantasy world, with the dream world moving further and further into the background as the years go by, to be replaced by reality as adults experience it. Part of the enforced traumatic programming is to make the dream-world permanent and reality unreal, for which fairy tales such as the Wizard of Oz or Alice in Wonderland are a commonly used tool. Brice tells:

> «« After I fled from California and was no longer living in the midst of my programmatic abuse base, nor was in therapy, I began having vivid, detailed memories of being used both as a sex slave and human mind file computer to some of our nation’s highest level governmental officials in and out of the White House. Among them: John F. Kennedy (sex [when just 10 years old] and delivered messages). Lyndon B. Johnson (sex and delivered messages),

> Henry Kissinger (mastermind behind the setup of my mind file, for use of the U.S. Government and also internationally), Nelson Rockefeller (mind file use, coordinated in conjunction with Henry Kissinger), Gerald Ford (sex and delivered messages), Jimmy Carter (delivered messages), Ronald Reagan (sex and delivered messages), George Bush senior (mind file use; he is a known pedophile and had sex with my programmed daughter Kelly), and top entertainment professionals, such as my 'owner' Bob Hope (sex and message courier). (…) My daughter Kelly was also prostituted to the younger Kennedy boys. (…) Our daughter, Kelly Suzanne Ford was born on Febr. 23, 1978, and from then on my son Kevin wasn't always the main focus of the torturous trauma - Kelly was. The torture and trauma began right after her birth; while we were still in Valley Presbyterian Hospital in Van Nuys, California, three men in suits came into the hospital room and closed the door… »»

In 2019, the film Serenity was released, a commercial flop, starring Matthew McConaughey as a fishing boat captain named Baker Dill. Several times we are told that he suffers from a traumatic stress syndrome, the details of which remain untold. For those familiar with mind controlled slave programming, it is clear that this film depicts the inner world of a monarch-slave. Everything takes place on Plymouth Island, from which there is no escape. It makes sense, because Plymouth Island is himself, and all the people he encounters there, are in his dream-world populated by his own split personalities …the actual reality of his life remains hidden. Sometimes, when Dill digs into his subconscious, deeper, deeper, deeper and deeper, which happens when he takes a great dive into the ocean, he meets his son who is a computer programming genius. That is one of the characteristics of a monarch-slave: the enormous geniality that arises from the obsessivenes of being dedicated to one task and that for each split person seperately. Dill's obsession with catching the 'big fish' - which he never finds, is symptomatic of this. His ex-girlfriend Karen, from whom he had that son, is being systematically tortured by her 'husband', who is actually Dill's programmer, and so badly that she has become a traumatic wreck. She believes to be relieved of it if her tormentor is put out of the way – but that, of course, is an illusion.

Those torture sessions are deliberate, are a regular part of the programming sessions, through which, provided the torture is extreme enough, the mind splits into more and more distinct personalities, each of which can be programmed separately by means of hypnotic commands and phantasies. Those split-ups, a better word is dissociations, stem from a self-defense mechanism of the person to keep functioning normally, to make life bearable. Satanic Ritual Abuse, i.e. torture and the creation of trauma and fear, torture by sometimes just having to watch terrible things, has always been part of Satanic practices and initiation rites for the purpose of getting a person to obey and come into contact with and be possessed by the invisible world of wandering spirits and demons. In addition to medieval practices, computerized methods are now used, electrochock, implants, etc., and chemical psychoactive methods (with banned substances) and they are all the time being refined. During dangerous sessions, doctors see to it via monitors that the monarch-slave stays alive. This is not the place to go into detail about the methods used, which are too bad for words. Just one example: If it turns out that a monarch-slave takes pleasure in sexual encounters, by way of punishment the perineum is cut without anesthesia and sutured immediately afterwards. What is done to small children is worse than bestial and really cannot be written down here. It should be mentioned that some victims afterwards did not object to the treatments they had undergone because of the power and talents they had received as a result, which they consider worth the price!

A side-note, while in trance, a monarch-slave does not need to feel pain. Brice tells:

> «« One time, mob guys put a needle into my eye to try to get me to talk, but it didn't help. The needle must have hit a certain nerve and my whole body jolted back. They couldn't understand how a woman could endure so much torture and they began to 'respect' me. They just didn't understand that I wasn't really brave. I just couldn't respond due to years of conditioning and sophisticated programming that rendered me completely dissociative and not in control of myself. By the time they figured this out they had already tortured me half to death. I was a total robot, programmed not to respond to pain or torture, and there were many mob-connected meetings in which I was involved in Vegas, Tahoe, Reno, Key Biscayne and other places. By the time they understood more about how to get information from me, my access routes or codes ended up getting passed around. My husband just stepped aside and let them have me, as he was programmed to do [he was a monarch-slave too]. There was never anyone to protect me. The mob involvement began in my early teens and continued for years. »»

It is not the Mafia that programs monarch-slaves. This is done under the scientific guidance of the CIA to which military institutions serve, which trains these human robots for a multitude of tasks. This happens not only in the United States, but now also in many other places around the world. But in the absence of documentation to that effect, I will limit myself here to what is happening in the United States, which was going on even before World War II. This then spilled over into Nazi Germany in which the notorious SS officer Josef Mengele played a leading role. It seems that after the war he was allowed to continue his programming work in the United States under the pseudonym of Dr. Green.

Brice writes furthermore: *"Elitists in the market for mind controlled slaves attend auctions that appear at first like children's fashion shows and then progress to striptease acts. I made 'appearances' in many shows before I was actually sponsored or sold. (...) At the age of six I was sold to Bob Hope on the open market."* Noted comedian Bob Hope was the Jeffrey Epstein of his day, the criminal busted for sex trafficking for the elite. Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra and Kissinger were a closely knit team, which is widely reported in Brice Taylor's book. She also writes: *"The media surrounding the exposes of Bob Hope's secret life and the books written by Arthur Marx (son of famous film comedian Groucho Max): "The Secret Life of Bob Hope", and Lawrence J. Quirk's recent book: "Bob Hope*: *The Road Well-Traveled", begin to portray some examples of the flaws to Bob's seemingly All American, patriotic and family loving public image. My controllers and abusers were not low-level criminals, but instead were some of the so-called 'adored' leaders and entertainers of our country."*

What also appears crystal clear from Brice's account is that all the American presidents, without exception, were following the instructions from on high. And if they stepped out of line they were 'punished', like President John F. Kennedy who didn't follow the advice of his staff members, who themselves were following instructions. His refusal to obey was less appreciated in some circles. He should have bombed Cuba, and by refusing to do so and blocking the Russian ships from entering Cuban ports, he prevented World War Three. After Jackie Kennedy had died, a number of tapes were released and in them she expressed the opinion that Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson was in the plot to kill her husband. There is an interesting book by Billie Sol Estes, the bag carrier, who was the middleman in organizing the assassination. In 2004 he published his memoirs: "The Last Witness". He thought the murder was done

because John F. Kennedy (JFK) wanted to abolish the extraordinary tax advantages of the Texan oil industry, but that certainly was not the only reason.

In the film's original footage of the assassination, it can be seen that the fatal shots that hit JFK's head knocks his head violently backwards. Lee Harvey Oswald called himself a patsy (slang for scapegoat). This was revealed, too, in the highly credible interview of James E. Files, posted on Youtube on Dec. 8th 2024, which was recorded in the Stateville Correctional Center of Illinois, where he was incarcerated (YouTube: JFK Assassin final interview before his death ◊ I shot JFK: The shocking Truth). Oswald did not shoot, as evidenced by a paraffin test, which could not detect gunshot residues on his face, only on both his hands, from collecting cartridges of the calibration tests by Files, the previous day. The gunmen were James Files and his maffia friend Charles Nicoletti, both from Chicago. Oswald was right when he called himself a patsy, but the previous days he did help James Files with the preparation of the shooting. Acoustic analysis discovered two different shootings. Kennedy's head was hit by two bullets at the same time (with a difference of one millisecond, more or less). On 29th March, 1977, Nicoletti was murdered in Chicago. He had been shot three times in the back of his head. George De Mohrenschildt died the same day (in reality a KGB spy, acc. to Pacepa). Both men were due to appear before the Select House Committee on Assassinations, where they were to be asked about their involvement in the assassination of JFK. James Files, who helped to prepare the Cuban invasion, commonly know as the Bay of Pigs incident, regarded JFK as a traitor, and he was thus personally motivated to do the killing. By the way, Oswald was also involved in Cuban affairs.

(After much debate in his administration, Kennedy authorized a clandestine invasion of Cuba by a brigade of Cuban exiles. The brigade hit the beach at the Bay of Pigs on April 17, 1961, but the operation collapsed in spectacular failure within two days.)

In 1968 Senator Bobby Kennedy, the brother of John, became a leading candidate for the nomination for the presidency, against initial expectations. He expressed the wish to reopen the investigations. That had to be prevented at all costs and so he was finished on June 5, 1968. In 2021 his presumed assassin Sirhan Sirhan asked release from prison and received the support of two of Kennedy's sons. In an interview with The Washington Post, Kennedy Jr. said he had spent months reviewing autopsy and police reports and interviewed witnesses who were there when his father was gunned down. After this evaluation and meeting with Sirhan, he was convinced that he did not kill his father and that there was a second gunman who carried out the assassination, shooting from behind. Reports through the years indicated 13 shots were fired that day when Sirhan's gun only held eight bullets. The reason I go over this is to show that there is more than meets the eye.

People tend to forget that it is a spiritual war being waged and that the core, the threads that keeps the monarch programming functioning is not just a system that is being imposed on a victim. It looks exactly like a computer programming system with a complicated structure, and which consists of more than a thousand split personalities fulfilling each other's needs. However, this would not be feasible without the guardians, who are demonic entities, and this is known to the insiders and it is exploited by them, and these ones present themselves to the abused victim as God himself. On the other hand Brice, as from early age, was supported by God's angels, who gave her consolation. A handler like Kissinger probably does not believe in God nor Lucifer and therefore, although he was an extremely competent organizer of Brice's mind files, I do not consider him an insider for this aspect. What surprises me is that people, who see what can be done to the human mind, do not come to understand that the mind, that fantastic

complicated piece of work, can only be the work of the God, creator of the universe. The mind's potential is meant to be fused with God's Mind and not to be abused for personal gain. It is by reading about the distasteful and beastly practice of mind control that I came to recognize the marvel of the creation that is us, and to thank God for it. Though the brains may be terribly complicated and represent a universe in a universe, it is just a piece of hardware. The manager of the brains is the soul with a myriad of incredible possibilities. This discovery brought me to the idea of 'hypnotic connectivity'. The training of monarch-slaves is as of present heavily geared toward psychic qualities, such as levitation. It was Bo Gritz who invented the term warrior-monk. He was a Special Forces officer, who bragged having assassinated 300 people on behalf of the US government, let's say he killed many. He is the most decorated officer in American history, and according to Fritz Springmeier he was a mind controlled slave.

In all this it becomes ever more clear that the real battle being fought is against Lucifer and his henchmen. Now that we are near the Reign of Peace the stinking pus needs to come in the open and be removed to allow for healing on a grand scale.

For those who wish to delve further in the topic of mind control, I recommend the following books, available on the internet, which is not for the faint hearted:

"**Thanks for the MEMORIES - the memoirs of a mind-controlled slave**" (the memoirs of Bob Hope's and Henry Kissinger's mind-controlled slave, used as a presidential sex toy and personal computer) by Brice Taylor - Brice Taylor Trust # 1999. An account of Brice Taylor's personal experience, reveals the hidden purpose behind the ritual abuse and mind control that is being reported around the world!

"**Trance Formation of America**" by Cathy O'Brien and Mark Phillips - Reality Marketing, Inc. # 2nd ed. 1995. This is the documented autobiography of a victim of government mind control. Cathy O'Brien is the only vocal and recovered survivor of the C.I.A.'s MK-Ultra Monarch Mind Control Project. Wow, what a journey! I'm literally traumatized by the account of her journey and was left in tears.

"**The Illuminati Formula to Create an Undetectable Total Mind Control Slave**" by Fritz Springmeier & Cisco Wheeler # 2003. The programming procedures, here described in meticulous detail, are based on many years research of the pertinent literature and consultation with deprogrammers, ex-programmers, therapists and counselors. The statements may not reflect the latest or currently accepted methodology among each and every faction of the New World Order, which carries out monarch-type programming. It is important to stress that the label 'monarch' is used in this book in a generic sense for the modern trauma-based total mind-control that is taking place. The Illuminati, because it is so secret, needs front organizations through which it can work. The CIA is a front for the Illuminati, and the CIA in turn sets up fronts. Some of those fronts, are elaborate, well-staffed and well-equipped programming sites, such as many of the state mental hospitals: the McGill Psychiatric Training Network consisting of 8 Montreal hospitals, but also the Presideo in San Francisco, as well as NOTS at China Lake, CA., etc.

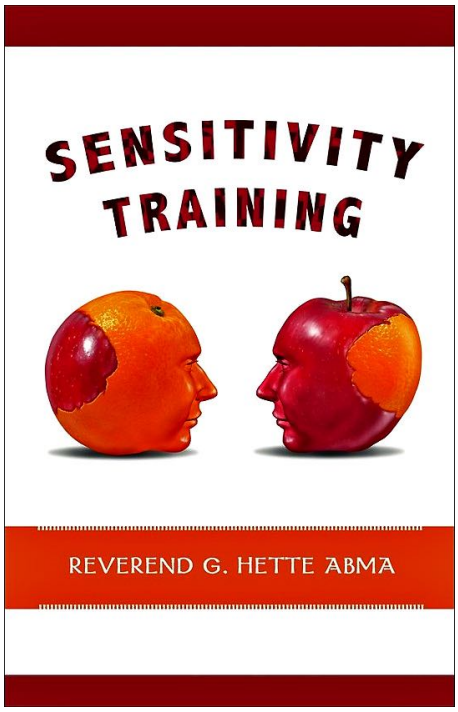
"**They Know Not What They Do**" (an illustrated guide to Monarch Programming Mind Control) by Fritz Springmeier & Cisco Wheeler # 2001.

REVIEW

‘SENSITIVITY-TRAINING’

By Reverend G. Hette Abma

Publisher Maatkamp Netherlands # 2014, (45 pages), € 8,50



Sensitivity training is very en vogue, often under different names. Sometimes it is simply called corporate training. This ‘group therapy’ is being widely used by organizations to remedy real or perceived communication failures among their employees. This is often done in the context of role-playing. This informative booklet from 1981 is seeing the light again and definitely fulfills a need.

After Abma has given an objective presentation on the cultural and social background of the phenomenon and a thorough historical-theoretical overview of it, he discusses the goals and methods of sensitivity training in our society. Finally, he discusses what this means from a Christian perspective. Because of the informative material, the booklet is also suitable for people who are not interested in the Christian benchmark.

Abma is not a priori against group training, but he does question some of its dubious aspects. Some trainers just fiddle around and are hardly up to the task. The lack of transparency during a session about the method and objectives is a criticism that organizers should take to heart. He also notes that enormous pressure is exerted during sessions to influence the identity of particular individuals, which might compromise the stability of their personality. In some instances, this has shown to have traumatic effects. Although psychoses are rare, it too often happens that the victims suffer from greatly reduced self-esteem, and this cannot have been the original intention.

Through the technique of self-accusation and critizing others, one strives to effect a change in attitude and disposition. Abma calls it ‘spiritual nudism’. One has to show solidarity with each and everyone, and by this approach the lowest individual morality comes into the forefront. The ‘petty bourgeois standards of decency’, in fact Christian ones, are looked down upon. The most extreme openness and frankness is promoted, as if that ever has had a healing effect! All barriers between classes, peoples and races must be broken down: freedom, equality and brotherhood, but now in different garb. Says Abma: *“Sensitivity training is the technique of converting people so that they will*

eagerly submit to the dictatorship of liberalization, leveling and socialization. Christian faith and morality are sidelined. Here we discover our main objection to sensitivity training. The authority of Scripture is not allowed for. On the contrary, it is dangerously undermined."

Hette Abma breaks a lance for the goals of sensitivity training. The loneliness in our society and the chill in mutual relationships is an acute problem. We owe it to Scripture to pursue more sincere and forthright manners. But when its authority is thrown on the scrap heap along with ethos, it is no panacea; on the contrary, it pulls deeper into the gutter. Abma summarizes toward the end of the booklet: *"Our objection to sensitivity training is not so much directed against the fact that the humanistic worldview emphasizes the flourishing of the individual, but against the breaking down of taboos, the excertion of violence on the individual conscience and the undermining of an awareness of God."*

Lastly, the author comes up with some helpful advice for those who are invited to participate in such group training. It is a useful book, especially for those who may someday be faced with this form of training.

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REVIEW

«« Between Delusion and Reality »»

Gerard Feller has another publication to his credit, this time on the Biblical evaluation of manipulative psychotechniques. His previous books dealt more specifically with holistic tendencies within health care and occult currents in our society.

As a psychosomatic physical therapist, Gerard Feller is associated with the Promise Foundation, an organization that says of itself: *"Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through the assessment of all kinds of social and spiritual currents and ways of thinking - especially in the medical and psychosocial fields, with the Word of God, the Bible, as yardstick."* The committee of recommendation includes the former director of the Evangelical Broadcasting Corporation, Bert Dorenbos, who is now working against the practice of abortion through his organization "Cry for Life".

The treatment methods that have blown over to us from the Eastern and shamanic worlds have acquired a place in for instance education under a variety of semi scientific and innocuous-sounding names. No small matter. Gerard Feller exposes these methods from a Christian perspective that have sprung up like poisonous mushrooms: *"Led by an army of shamans, witch doctors, healers, sorcerers, magicians and witches from all corners of the world, postmodern man [unfortunately also Christian] is brought into contact with the spirit world in order to find, supernaturally, strength, knowledge and healing."* (p. 123)

Precisely because the book has good sides, I find it unfortunate that the author quotes the world-renowned Deepak Chopra in two full chapters, page after page, even though these are satanically inspired texts. Chopra is an Ayurveda adept (Hinduism). 'Masters' like him seek inspiration for their quasi-scientific writings from spiritual entities that are said to be in the psychic powers that reside in themselves. As Feller demonstrates, this is based on demonic possession! Their penmanship is accordingly. It is unadulterated snake venom.

In view of the foregoing, Chopra is inadequately rebuked. No easy job, for the inspirational effect of his language is great. Gerard Feller's approach inadvertently promotes the other side. Take the Bible. Nowhere does it reveal the details of the wickedness of sorcerers, soothsayers and conjurers. Nowhere in the Bible are these types of people allowed to explain their 'craft'. Gerard Feller does it differently and gives them a broad stage. This will arouse in a number of readers an unhealthy curiosity, and thus they fall into the trap. Short quotations here and there would have sufficed with additional summaries in Feller's own words.

The Bible is always very careful to reveal the practice and way of thinking of the adversary (adversary in Greek is 'satan'). An example is the account of the meeting from Acts 15, when the church fathers decided, as a concession, that the Christians from the Gentiles do not have to follow the precepts of Judaism – although sensible in themselves – except with regard to eating what is tainted by idols, fornication, what is strangled, and the consuming of blood. These four prohibitions are interesting because they point to the idolatrous rites. But the Bible itself is silent about the further details. The Word of God treats these kind of things with discretion. That discretion is lacking in "Between Delusion and Reality". And so my assessment of this book is not unqualifiedly favorable.

APPENDIX 15

Birgitta of Sweden
Heavenly Revelations

1303-1373

• Reflections on the Free Will •

Christ's words to his bride, describing Himself as a great king, and about the two treasures symbolizing love of God and love of the world, and also a lesson about making progress in life.

From Saint Birgitta's Book (Vol. 1 – Ch. 15)

I am like a great and mighty king. Four things pertain to a king. First, he must be rich; second, generous; third, wise; and fourth, charitable. I am truly the king of angels and of all men. I possess these just mentioned four qualities. First, I am the richest of all, because I provide for everyone's needs and still possess the same amount after I have given it away. Second, I am the most generous of all because I am willing to give to anyone who asks for it. Third, I am the wisest of all because I know what is due to everyone and what is best for them. Fourth, I am charitable because I want to give more than one desires.

I have, as you may say, two treasures. Heavy materials, as heavy as lead, which are stored in the first treasure chest. The place of this chest is surrounded by pointed and thorny thorns. But these heavy things seem as light as a feather to one who begins to turn them over and learn how to carry them. The things that seemed heavy and difficult before, become light and the things he still thought were sharp at first, become soft. The second treasure chest seems to contain glittering gold and precious gems and delicious drinks. But on closer inspection, the gold is all dull and the potions are poisonous.

There are two roads leading to these treasures, although first there was one. At the fork in the road, that is, where the two roads separate, there stood a man pleading with three men to go the second way. He said: 'Listen, listen to what I am going to say! But if you don't want to listen, at least use your eyes to see if what I am saying is true. If you don't want to use your ears and eyes, at least use your hands to go by touch and prove to yourself that there is no falsehood in my words.' Then number one said: 'Let's listen and see if he speaks the truth.' The second man said: 'Whatever he says is untrue.' The third: 'I know he speaks the truth, but it leaves me cold.'

What can these two treasures be other than my love and, in the other case, a love of worldliness? Two paths lead to these treasures. Self-degradation and complete self-denial lead to my love while physical enjoyment leads to love of the

worldly. For some, the burden they have to bear in following my law of love seems leaden. That is because while fasting and vigilance or self-denial they have the thought that it is leaden. When they are taunted or when they do their prayers, it is like sitting on sharp thorns. Thus it will always be torture for them.

The person who always wants to remain in my love will first have to reverse the load, that is, make a determined effort and unrelenting effort to do good. Then he must gradually lift it a little, that is, he must do what is within his power, thinking: 'If God helps me, I can bring this to fruition.' Finally, persevering in the task he has undertaken, he will do the things that at first seemed heavy with such great joy that all the hardships of fasting and watching, or any hardship at all, will seem as light as a feather. My friends dwell in peace, but to the wicked and godless men, existence seems strewn with thorns and thistles, and this happens while my friends know the highest joy on a road that seems to them as soft as rose petals.

The direct path to this treasure consists in scorning his own impulses, which happens when a person, who thinks of my suffering and death, does not pursue his own will, but fights it while constantly trying to improve himself. Although this path is somewhat difficult at first, there is still a lot of joy to be had during his transformation, so much so that things that at first seemed unbearable, later turn out to be very light, so that he can rightly say to himself: 'God's yoke is wonderful.'

The second treasure is the world. There are gold, precious gems and drinks, which seem delicious but give a bitter and poisonous aftertaste. This is what happens when a person wears the gold. Later when his body is weakened and his limbs have lost strength, the time will come that, after his bone marrow is consumed, his body will drop dead. Then he will leave behind him the gold and precious stones, which will then be worth no more to him than mud.

The drinks of the world, I mean by this his pleasures, look appetizing, but, once landed in the stomach they make the head light and the heart heavy, they destroy the body. Then the person withers away like grass. While approaching the pain of death, all these pleasures become as bitter as poison. Doing one's own will leads to this treasure. Now, that takes place when a person does not resist the stirrings of his evil inclinations and does not think about what I have prescribed and done, but immediately does everything that comes into his mind, whether it is proper or not.

Three men walk this path. By this I mean all those who love the world and their own will. Standing at the entrance to the crossroads, I implored them, for with My coming in a human body I showed man two paths, as an exhortation to follow one and avoid the other. It is the way that leads to life or to death. Before I came in

the body, there was only one road on which all men, good or evil, went to the kingdom of the dead.

I, your Redeemer, am the figure who so urged, and pleaded thus:

People, listen to My words that lead on the way to life, use your senses to see that what I say is true. If you do not listen to it or cannot listen to it, at least look - I mean by this, use faith and reason - and see that My words are true. In the way that the visible things can be discerned by the eyes of the body, the invisible ones can be discerned and believed by the eyes of faith. There are many simple souls in the Church who do but few works yet are saved thanks to their faith. They believe that I am the Creator and Redeemer of the Universe.

There is no one who cannot understand and come to the conclusion that I am God when he contemplates how the earth bears fruit and the sky gives rain, how the trees turn green, how the animals persist, each according to its own kind, how the stars are of service to humankind, how things happen outside of man's will. From all this, each can see that he is mortal and that it is God who controls everything. If God did not exist it would be a confused mess. Thus, for the sake of human development, everything is rationally disposed by God. Not the slightest thing exists without purpose.

So if someone cannot understand or comprehend My powers due to his own weakness, he can see and believe them thanks to faith. But people anyway! - if you don't want to use your mind to know My power, you can still use your hands to do the deeds that I and My saints have done.

My works are so evident that no one can doubt that they are God's works. Who raised the dead and gave light to the blind if not God? Who drove out the demons if it was not God? Have I not then taught things that are for the salvation of soul and body and are easy to bear?

The first man says, or rather some say: 'Let us listen and find out if it is true!' These people remain in My service for a time, not out of love, but as an experiment and in imitation of other believers, nevertheless without giving up their own will. They want to do their own will alongside mine. Consequently, they find themselves in a dangerous situation because they serve two lords, but neither one they can serve well. When they are called [die], they will be rewarded by the lord they have loved the most.

The second says, or rather some say: 'Whatever He says is all lies and the Bible is false.' I, however, am God, the Creator of all things; nothing was made without Me. I established the new and old covenant, they came from My mouth and there is no falsehood in them because I am the truth. Thus, those who say that I

spread lies and that the Holy Scriptures are false will never see My face. After all, their conscience says that I am the God who makes all things happen according to his will. The heavens give light to the earth, but they themselves cannot; the earth bears its fruit; the sky makes the earth fertile; all animals exist according to a fixed order; the demons acknowledge My majesty; for love of Me, the righteous endure incredible pains. They see all these things, yet they do not see Me. They could have come to know My justice had they ascertained how the earth swallowed up the wicked [the Korachites during the exodus from Egypt] and how fire consumed the wicked [Sodom and Gomorrah]. Likewise, they could have come to know My mercy if they had taken note of the water that for the righteous gushed out of the rock [during the exodus from Egypt], or the water that parted for them [the passage through the Red Sea], or if they had taken note of the fire that did not affect them [Sadrak, Mesek and Abednego], or if they had taken note of how heaven and earth fed them [during the exodus from Egypt]. Because they could have known all these things and still claim that I am a liar, they will never be allowed to behold My face.

The third says, or rather some say: ‘We know very well that He is the true God, but it does not move us. These people will be tormented forever because they have disdained Me, their Lord and God. Is it not a tremendous contempt on their part to use My gifts yet refuse to serve Me? If they had acquired these things from their own hard labor and did not owe everything to Me their contempt would be less.

However, I will extend My grace to those who willingly bear My burden and are fervent to the utmost. I will cooperate with those who are willing to bear My burden, that is, those who progress every day out of love for Me. I will be their strength and so ablaze them in fire that they want to do more and more. The people who remain steadfast despite oppression – but stand in a place that is essentially peaceful – are those who toil patiently day and night without succumbing to fatigue, but become ever more diligent, thinking that what they are doing is little. These are my dear friends, and such are few because most have loved the drinks of the second treasury.

PART 5

God far away …and yet nearby

The Creation, by Yitzhak Ben Yehuda

In the Bible, God is the total abstraction, the totally other, a mysterious unapproachable God. At the same time, He is also the utterly near, the approachable: 'He who dwells amongst us.' Creation is enclosed by three walls, Jewish tradition teaches, just like the very first letter in the creation account, the beth (ב), so that we are not permitted to know for certain what was before creation, nor what is above it (Heaven), nor below it (Hell).[95] ***The beth also refers to paradise, the 'Beth Eden' of Genesis 3:24, a home that has become an enclosed space ever since the Fall. Paradise had peepholes, so to speak, through which to peer at the other side. Even that is withheld from us! Only what is in front of us (Hebrew reads from right to left) or has ever been before it - in what is called history, we may observe. Since we do not know the other three directions, we must appropriate it by faith. The righteous person lives by faith! That is why the first letter is a beth and not an aleph (א), our 'a', because aleph designates God, the creator and master of All. Aleph also encompasses that duality, for it consists of a curl above and a curl below, connected by a line. The upper curl would indicate God's hidden and infinite attributes, and below it indicates the revelation of his being. It is that same paradox in our experience with Yahweh, who is at once hidden and comprehensible, distant and yet near.***

39 – Forgive them, for they know not what they do!

Jesus' first crossword was: *"Forgive them for they know not what they do."* That was not just for his executioners. To many it may be a fool's errand, but there is deep wisdom in it nonetheless. Why that forgiveness was for us and not for Lucifer? Answer: because he 'knew'. The angel of light saw through all the consequences of his rebellion. Therefore, judgment came immediately and was final. Lucifer had a will to turn

95) Genesis Rabbah 1:10.

against God. Our will has this same freedom, but thanks to our not-knowing (Ex. 33:18-23), it can be considered a gift from above because our ignorance gives reprieve.[96] The *"no one can see My face (panim)"* (verse 23) means 'here on earth'. Only Jesus could see the Father in this earthly abode. (John 6:46) Only He knew. But then, He was without sin. Our un-knowing provides diminished accountability. Luke 12:48: *"He who did not know, yet committed things deserving punishment, will be punished lightly."* We can be glad for this 'reserve' called earth, which removes from us the avenging arm of heavenly justice! The King James translation puts it beautifully: *"For now we perceive through a glass, darkly."* (1 Cor. 13:12) Finally, after a life of grace upon grace, we bid farewell to this 'reserve' and judgment follows. Only across the threshold of death will everything have become transparent and *"shall I know even as also I am known."* (again 1 Cor. 13:12) The cry 'see first and then believe' overlooks the essence of our existence. The irritating un-knowing, make no mistake, has a function. It will not be until the world has come at the threshold of the Reign of Peace that not-knowing will be largely removed, forcing each and everyone to make a choice: for or against God, for or against Lucifer, in fact for or against the Reign of Peace.

Man has Free Choice, but not Sovereignty

Man-made history is not history's only dimension. The pathos and judgment of God transcend the human dimension. Great conquerors are seen as mere tools of his mysterious Will... Man has choice, but not sovereignty. History is not a meaningless conglomeration of neutral facts, but a drama unfolding the relationship between God and Man. The drama is staged in time and encompasses the wide arena of human affairs. A battle is raging: man in his presumption undertakes to fashion history in disregard and defiance of God. The prophets witness the misery that men endure as well as Man's wickedness – that God endures and even tolerates [unbearable burden except for God]. God is wrestling with Man and history appears to be the stage where God is defied, where his judgment is enacted, and where his kingship is to be established.

"The Prophets" by Abraham Joshua Heschel (ch. 10)

Not-knowing has a function. The argument holds that only in a condition of lack of knowledge may our love for Truth be revealed. We start our earthly toil in a heap of un-knowing in order to permit us to get the great experience of the true meaning of Love and love for Truth, which involves a certain amount of suffering. That voyage of discovery is our main purpose in life. The angels knew but did not 'learn', which explains the insurrection in Heavens and the immediate punishment. And thus not-knowing should be considered as a true opportunity and a blessed occasion and is to a certain extent preferable to knowing. (Gen. 2:17, 22:12; Mt. 1:19) At present, the angels are 'learning' by watching us and thus our lesson is also theirs.

In some cases we possess a kind of knowledge that Lucifer also had. Take for instance a train that will be passing by. If I throw myself in front of that train, I can 'prophesy' what the consequence will be (regarding the physical aspect). Then the judgment of that train colliding with my body is immediate and final. In summary, it is thanks to a God-given not-knowing that we are granted to lead a life of doing wrong, again and again, where our intention is to do right. But alas, it is not that simple. Doesn't Paul

96) Prior to Exodus 33:18-23, Moses sees Yahweh face to face (verse 11: panim el panim), but he does not see his glory then, otherwise the discussion from verse 12 onward would not have followed. In Genesis 32:31, Archfather Jacob also had that kind of vision. The prophet Isaiah, on the other hand, did see God's glory, but his sin and guilt had to be covered before that. (Isa. 6:5-7)

say in the letter to Romans (7:18): *"For I realize that in me, in my own nature, good does not reign. I want the good, but I cannot do the good."* Where is free will? [97)]

From earliest beginnings, the problem of 'free will' or decision-making power has been related to the question of accountability, which has become an essential element in our Western system of justice. In the intention of the heart (Heb. Kavanah) free will is enclosed. To go to action lies on a different level. Most thinkers on the problem were trying to show that we humans have control over our decisions, that our actions 'depend on us', and that they are not pre-determined by fate, by arbitrary gods, by logical necessity, or by a natural determinism. Augustine had a more subtle way to approach the problem and stated that our will derives neither from our reasonable insight, nor from the 'absolute' freedom to choose for the good or to reject it. Almost everything written about free will to date, has been a debate about the precise meaning of concepts like causality, necessity, and other kinds of determinism. The standard argument against free will is that it cannot possibly be reconciled with either randomness or determinism, which brings to the foreground the notion of 'appetite'. The will – in our concept of free will – can be considered as an appetite, that is an incitement from the heart (something that intimately belongs to the individual) by which people are inclined toward something, whether by intellectual capacity or by nature (nature might express hunger and things like that). This is the approach of Thomas Aquinas. In humans it is mostly a combination of the two. By means of the intrinsic appetite, we seek and desire things; we strive to unite ourselves in various ways with them. These appetites are contingent on some kind of awareness, instinctively or not, that needs to be addressed. It is normative to which appetites are given priority and how.

Correlative to free will is freedom of speech. A government can never eliminate it completely, because human nature is such that we inevitably form opinions about things and want to express them. However, people can be dominated to varying degrees. Dominance is an unspeakable evil that seeks to nullify the gift of free will. (See Book of Truth: 2 Oct. 2013)

Although we are the initiator of our choices, we cannot conclude from this that in those choices there is merit, as if free will is absolute. Strictly speaking, man has no merit in what he does or chooses. Any 'merit' is subsidiary to the grace that precedes it, allowing us to participate in God's work of creation, which is wonderfully described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church from 1997, in the chapter dealing with merit:

> «« Since the initiative belongs to God in the order of grace, no one can merit the initial grace of forgiveness and justification, at the beginning of conversion. Moved by the Holy Spirit and by charity, we can then merit for ourselves and for others the graces needed for our sanctification, for the increase of grace and charity, and for the attainment of eternal life. Even temporal goods like health

97) There is also free will without a moral connotation of, say, a dog that decides to lie down to the left instead of the right of the fireplace, or of someone who prefers to wear gray rather than black pants. Here a different kind of free will is on stage.

and friendship can be merited in accordance with God's wisdom. These graces and goods are the object of Christian prayer. Prayer attends to the grace we need for meritorious actions. »» (nr 2010)

40 – The uniqueness of a human being

How do we differ from animals in that respect? Of many spider varieties the females cannibalize their males after copulation. Big females eat their puny partners simply because they are hungry and because they can. Is it free will? No. Because they are not free nót to do so if the occasion arises. Take the hypothetical case that such a thing occurs to a human being, not that she eats her partner, but kills him upon discovery of adultery. Then her defense might be that because of the circumstances she could not do otherwise; that it was a 'crime of passion'. Yet there is a big difference. For that spider knows no doubts and will have no remorse afterwards. Man, however, can have misgivings and still do the wrong thing, and can also regret it afterwards, even if he was unable to do differently. This is why the 'intention of an act' and the capacity to act play an important role in a court of justice, which gives an act a moral value, which decides the measure why such a thing was intrinsically good or evil. (Luke 20:47)

Seen this way, the text *"I do what I do and don't ask why"* is an ugly denial of our uniqueness.[98)] Man must come to a certain degree of introspection to do justice to his capacity for self-consciousness. Woe to him who does not care! (Mt. 12:36) How often unbridled fantasies lurk, and therein may lie false intentions. (Mt. 5:28) In the life of Francis Romana,[99)] we read of a four-hour vision of Hell in 1414: *"God wanted to show me some ladies I had known in Roman society. For what offenses were they condemned (to eternal damnation)? Among other things, for culpable transgressions, not always executed."* [100)] The film industry has managed to exploit this well; it has elevated unrestrained fantasies to true art. Especially after TV entered living rooms, moral perversity rose to great heights. After all, the fantasy and the act are not separate. Man not only thinks, but is also able to weigh against each other what lives inside him. It must be said: like an animal, even the thoughtless man can be 'good'. But surely that is a sad matter that falls short of his calling to draw near to God.

On the uniqueness of our humanity, the leading post-war Dutch psychiatrist, Herman van Praag, has said interesting things, speaking from his Jewish background: [101)]

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98) The most simple organisms have simple reflexes, reacting directly to a stimulus from the physical environment. A more evolved organism is capable of processing stimuli and directing its behaviour in a deterministic fashion, not only in terms of the medium it inhabits, but also of memorized information. But this is not self-conscious as human beings are, who may or may not adapt to the Model of behaviour (the Ten Commandments) being offered to him in a non-compulsory fashion. The task of a human being is to develop himself simultaneously in three ways: in the relationship to his fellow beings, in his relationship to God, and in the relationship to himself, through the ennoblement of his soul, which is called to holiness (Hebr. 'kedusha').

99) St. Francisca Romana (1384-1440) was a foundress of the Oblates of St. Benedict. She was a scion of the noble family De Bussi. She was known for her many miracles, mystical gifts and expressions of charity. She is the patroness of the city of Rome. Because she had much contact with her guardian angel, she was proclaimed the patron saint of motorists by Pope Pius XI (1922-39). She is buried in the Francesca Romana Church, next to the Forum Romanum. A consecration of vehicles takes place here every year on March 9.

100) In Jewish ethics God would nót condemn sinful desires or appetites that are not put into action which completely contradicts Christian teaching. See: "What Judaism teaches about lust" by Ravi Eis, in the influential "First Things" (issue Apr. 4, 2023).

«« *Q:* Religion is often mentioned in the same breath as morality. That chimpanzees possess some degree of morality would prove that our morality has grown evolutionarily. There is a line from morality in animals to morality in us humans.

Van Praag: I see mostly differences here. Sure, there are no doubt moral drives in certain types of apes, but there is a deep gulf between human morality and the morality in the animal world. The evolutionary, through-line, one assumes is in fact a dotted line. Compare it to a few bricks and The Royal Palace in Amsterdam. All right, those bricks are necessary; a condition sine qua non. The palace is made up of such bricks. But if you assume a direct relationship between a few bricks and a palace, you are disregarding the genius inherent in high architectural design. Similarly, we find rudimentary moral elements in some animals, but they bear no relation to our human moral sense. Morality is not only at the level of feeling and intuition, but has been given a fine-tuned complement, an unfolding and allusion [which has also taken shape] in religious and philosophical traditions. »»

The sin of angels

The sin of angels could not be corrected, because the immutability of their nature makes them impenitent from any direction they once take. But men's will is changeable by nature, so that they are not only able to choose different things, good or evil, but also abandon one choice and turn to another. This changeableness of the will remains in man as long as he is united to his body which is subject to variation. When the soul is separated from the body it will have the same immutability as an angel naturally has; so that after death the soul is impenitent, and cannot turn from good to evil or from evil to good.

Thomas Aquinas: "De rationibus fidei contra Saracenos, Graecos et Armenos ad Cantorem Antiochenum" (Ch. 5)

How remarkable that in the metaphorical meaning of the Hebrew 'pa-nim', meaning 'countenance', is contained the meaning of intention, as shown in 2 Chronicles 32:2. In the intention of our countenance, our free will reveals itself before God's Countenance, before God who not only perceives the act but also the associated circumstances. Only He can weigh them against each other out of his supreme justice, and He also wishes under certain conditions to forgive the transgression, with the restriction, however, that if we do something wrong, perhaps out of stupidity, our repentance will be only forgiven if it coincides with the firm resolution not to do it again. That type of repentance will be pleasing to Jesus and his heavenly Father, again and again and again, even if They foresee that the resolution will bear no fruit! *"Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times? Jesus answered: I tell you, not seven times, but seventy times seven."* (Mt. 18:21-22) God knows that man is weak and changeable. Nevertheless, He will never fail to forgive (Mt. 18:21-22), and will continue to bless our desire for self-perfection, which sometimes leads to one step forward and two steps backward. Moral perfection should occupy our minds constantly. Then we will be able to take two steps forward and one backward. In the ten creation sayings within the six days of creation, God's blessings count as acts of creation! Only through blessing can creation, can we, get to a higher plane, according to the dictum: *"Be perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect."*

101) "God, Religie en ons brein – in gesprek met psychiater Herman M. van Praag (God, Religion and our Brain - in conversation with psychiatrist Van Praag) by Tjerk de Reus - Kok Publishers, Kampen # 2011 (p. 162).

(Mt. 5:48, Lev. 19:2) - a perfection that in this dispensation remains a lofty dream.[102)] The "Thy kingdom come" should be a sighing supplication, full of 'kavanah', not a routine thumping.

The Psychology of Evil

Fyodor Dostoevsky is a famous writer of Russian literature. His first novel from 1866 was "Guilt and Punishment", which deals with the psychology of evil. Seventeen years earlier, he was arrested and sentenced to death by firing squad. Just before the moment of execution, he was pardoned and had to do four years of forced labor in Siberia. He then entered military service and was sent to Kazakhstan for several more years. His books testify to the horrors he experienced in the labor camps. Dostoevsky used his Siberian time to examine Christianity from an atheistic point of view. The New Testament was the only literature available to him. Eventually he reconciled himself to Christianity. He later wrote the meaningful sentence: "It is not like a child that I believe and confess Jesus Christ. My hosanna is born of a blazing furnace of doubt." (Notebook 1880-81) Another memorable quote is from "The Possessed": "Man is unhappy because he doesn't know he's happy. It's only that." If there was one who could rightfully write about guilt and punishment it was Dostoevsky.

41 – As long as there is life, there is hope

Jeremiah 3:21 reads: *"A voice was heard on the desolate heights. Weeping and supplications of the children of Israel (image of each one personally), for they have perverted their way."* They perverted their way, in Hebrew: *"ki hè' èvoe et darkam"*. Translating the latter literally, we get: *"for they deflected their way."* The root meaning of the word-stem 'aváh' (from which èvoe is derived) is to bend away, to deviate. In that weeping supplication we find repentance. In the acceptance of that repentance, God will 'turn' his face toward us (pana, from which panim is derived), so that we can get to know Him a little better and, in an ongoing process, get to know Him better and better. But if we do not repent and persist in our errant ways, God will 'turn away' his face from us (again pana), a term that includes rejection, as in Psalm 132:10 (Mt. 13:12). Then we experience God's wrath. But God's wrath differs from humans, for his involvement always tries to bring man to himself. The well known chassidic rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-72) tells that the threat of punishment is one of the most prominent features of the prophetic orations, as it is stated in his book "The Prophets" (ch. 10). And he continues:

> «« Punishment has three aims: retributive, deterrent, and reformatory. The divine intention, according to the prophets, is not primarily 'retributive', to impose penalty in consequence of wrongdoing; but rather deterrent, to

102) Dispensation indicates that God divides salvation history into time periods. As one epoch passes into another, some characteristics are retained, others will disappear and new ones will be added.

> discourage transgression by fear of punishment; and reformatory, to repair, to refine, to make pure by affliction: Gods' purpose is not to destroy but to purify. (cf. Isa. 27:7-8; 28:29) »»

The educational aspect of punishment is corrective or restorative. In the grand scheme of things, everything must be in mutual balance, complement or in harmony with each other. Every action elicits a counter-action; 1 Peter 3:21 speaks of either antitype or counter-strike. Action and reaction are the essence of vibration, which always seeks balance. One might go further and say that balance is a guiding principle of the work of creation, and it is therefore that any wrongdoing needs to be compensated. The unjust suffering at one end of the spectrum, because wrongdoing always causes suffering, must be remedied by a counter effect, perhaps elsewhere or later, perhaps on the other side of the earth where a storm pounds in response to some heinous crime. (JNSR 4-3-2003) Perhaps as a means of atonement, someone else will be affected by vicarious suffering. *"The blindness in some will always be compensated by others' suffering: through others, those few will be saved [by having their hearts broken open]."* (JNSR 13-7-2008)

Why God could Not Forgive Lucifer?

Angels were created as perfect beings with free will and conscience. Lucifer is the originator of the lie, which causes degeneration of life's spirit. While in a state of affliction, Lucifer is a resistor and disruptor of true life, and he has spread death to humans and the fallen angels in order to be the greatest of all, to be their unchallenged leader [with the object to bring humans in a very miserable condition under him, instead of them being superior to him]. Forgiveness is not extended to Lucifer and his followers, because there was no imperfection or ignorance present in them.

A TikTok based on the super.AI (artificial intelligence) answering service (Dec. 23 2022)

How can rejection deliver rapprochement? The evildoer, who always excuses himself, that is, shows no repentance, will be less accountable from less 'knowing', which paradoxically opens the way to repentance.[103)] Who could ever come to repentance if he understood the real weight of his sins? Time and again the wicked man will be invited through the experiences of life to seek God, if only to be delivered from his miserable condition. Abraham Heschel notes: [104)]

> «« Hardness of heart is a condition of which the person afflicted is unaware. Not knowing what ails him, he is unable to repent and to recover. However, when hardness is intensified from 'above', responsibility is assumed by God.

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103) In Isaiah 6:10-13 it says that the minds of the people are hardened, the ears made deaf and the eyes closed lest they understand and repent, but it also says that this happens for the preservation of a holy remnant. Apparently the people had become so unruly that there was nothing else for God to do. Here one does need to distinguish between how God deals with nations and individuals. We might as well apply this quote to the end times, when the Church will have fallen into decline and the true servants of God will find each other in the Remnant Church. Since it has not wanted to listen to the heavenly messages, God will leave the church institution at that time to its own devices. The specific end-time messages began with the message of La Salette in 1846 and have since swelled to a veritable flood. However, the Church of Rome remained deaf and blind to them. In 1851, the appearance of La Salette was acknowledged by Pope Pius IX but immediately after his death in 1878, that message was put on the index of forbidden books! This is only the first of a whole series of similar incidents that have occurred in the Church.

> He smites and He restores, bringing about a revival of sensitivity. It seems that the only cure for willful hardness is to make it absolute. Half-callousness, paired with obstinate conceit, seeks no cure. When hardness is complete, it becomes despair, the end of conceit. Out of despair, out of total inability to believe, prayer bursts forth! »»

After the long-desired event of the inner illumination of conscience, God will make a second attempt to win over the stubborn as yet, but this time by driving them into supreme despair, for then pride is done with, and that is one of the functions of the Three Days of Darkness, which has as its origin a natural cause but also a supernatural one, reason why a darkness reigns such as has never existed since the beginning of the Earth. Everyone will then be completely and irresistibly thrown back upon themselves. And then, immediately after those days, there will be the 'rapture' of the living, and God's cataclysmic judgment will strike the Earth.

Blessed Anna Maria Taigi (1769-1837) is the most famous seer of the Three Days of Darkness. She predicts that during those days and nights an absolute darkness will cover the whole earth in which *"all the enemies of the Church will perish"*. However, the unwilling engaged in sinful activities, New Age, etc., will still have the opportunity to repent and be saved. Anna Taigi sees this event as follows:

> «« An intense darkness will come over the whole earth that lasts for three days and three nights. Nothing can be seen, and the air will be laden with pestilence that will claim mainly, but not only, the enemies of religion. It will be impossible during this darkness to use artificial lighting except blessed candles. Anyone who, out of curiosity, opens his window to look outside, or leaves his home, will drop dead on the spot. During these three days, people should stay at home, pray the Rosary and beg for God's mercy. All enemies of the Church, whether known or unknown, will perish all over the world during that universal darkness, except for a few whom God will soon convert. The air will be infested by demons appearing under all kinds of hideous forms. »» (Private Proph. 1863)

Marie-Julie Jahenny (1850-1941), known as the Breton stigmatist, elaborates on the Three Days of Darkness. She says it will take place on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday when all of Hell will have been unleashed to strike at those who are outside their homes without a burning blessed pure wax candle. These candles will miraculously continue to burn all that time, but refuse to give light in the homes of the wicked. There is also the Book of Truth, which states these days explicitly and implicitly, according to the messages of Jesus:

> «« The sun will disappear until finally no light shines on the earth for three days. The only light will be that which comes from the Truth. And on the fourth day, the heavens will burst open and light – as you never thought possible – will stream from the heavens. Then I will be seen by every person in every country at the same time, in all my Glory, as I come to reclaim the Kingdom promised to Me by my Father. »» (24 Oct. 2014)

> «« For those who choose to believe in false gods and do not recognize the Triune God, it will not be easy to accept Me, for you have always rejected Me. Yet I will draw you to Me and embrace you. The power of God will descend upon you, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, and you will find it difficult to turn your backs on Me. So of all those who see Me, including those who have rejected Me in this life, at that stage most of you will realize the Truth. You will allow Me to draw you into my Holy Arms. Then I will lift you all into my New

104) "The Prophets" by Abraham Joshua Heschel (ch. 10, called Chastisement).

Kingdom in a moment, in an instant. And then the beginning of the end will begin. The souls who have idolized the Beast [Antichrist] and who have surrendered to Satan with body, mind and soul, and who became his willing agents, have nowhere to go, nowhere to hide and will be left without any help, for Satan will have abandoned them. For by that time Satan will be thrown into the abyss, and at the same time his power will completely cease. To those souls I say this. Even at that stage I will show you Mercy. You must call on Me and say: "Jesus, help me. Jesus, forgive me for all my sins." ... and I will also lift you up to my New Paradise. I will save every soul who calls on Me just before the heavens close; the mountains collapse and the sea floods the earth. And then the heavens will disappear along with the old earth. My New Paradise will rise, the new heaven and Earth, just as it was created before Adam and Eve, and everyone will rejoice. For that will be the greatest day since God created Adam and Eve. Never despair and now remember my words to you. »» (June 13 2014)

42 – A lamp for my foot is Your Word

The suffering inflicted upon oneself is up to that, but the suffering inflicted on the innocent is not easy to explain. Besides, there is also suffering without logic in terms of guilt and atonement, such as certain diseases or a stupid car accident with severe injuries. How is it possible that God allows such things? Why that suffering? Isn't that an 'injustice' to shake with clenched fist? All that remains is to believe that it somehow works for the better. Otherwise, God could not be the God of Love and absolute justice. Job, too, struggled with that question. In chapter 28 of the book of the same name, he comes to the conclusion that wisdom – about knowing the meaning of the suffering and injustice that man endures – is hidden from all that lives. (verse 21) Finally, God lets man know (verse 28): *"Wisdom? Wisdom is fearing God (in the sense of being in awe of) and shunning evil",* which ties in with the first verse of the book, which says that this Job was a man who *"feared God and kept away from evil".*

Everything a man does should be aimed at getting closer to God in order to be able to behold a gleam of his glory. He should strive to bring down the walls that still separate him from the Father. Because of the God who is far away, if we want to live a pleasing life, we are forced to live by faith. And then, more and more, God will reveal Himself to us. So it is first believe and then see. In Heaven we do not have to live by faith, because there we 'see', then God is near and our happiness is complete, according to the word of the psalmist: *"My delight - that is to be near God."* (Ps. 73:28) Here on earth, man lives by faith, that the movement of his heart may be made manifest, not only with regard to God, but also with regard to himself. Contrary to public opinion, we determine the arrangement of our lives not by the intellect, but by the heart, which is the image of our emotional center, from whence our intentions come – for good or evil. Thus God complains through the prophet: *"They draw near with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, while their hearts are far from Me."* (Is. 29:13)

We who have at our disposal God's Word should not seek to be our own law, but should take it as our guide, according to the word of the psalmist: (Ps. 119:105-106)

«« Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep Your righteous judgments. I am afflicted very much. Revive me, O Lord, according to Your word. Accept, I pray, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me Your judgments. »»

God's Word, like a spotlight, each time illuminates a piece of truth and its legal order. It is only in Heaven that everything stands out before us shadowlessly, without spot or wrinkle. Everything can then be grasped with a single glance. In our vale of tears here,

however, our knowing is always partial. In the teaching of a messianic Jewish organization this problem is elucidated as follows: [105)]

> «« Being aware that we do not see God clearly [in all his aspects] should help to keep us humble. It should make us reluctant to criticize other people's theologies and their experiences with God. They may have perceived an aspect of the Almighty that we have not, or we may have found revelation that has been withheld from them. Neither of us is to be blamed for not seeing the whole picture. In this world, the whole picture is unavailable. Jesus told the theologians of his day: *"You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form."* (John 5:37) That is why a true appreciation of the greatness of God excludes religious arrogance. »»

Notwithstanding, the Lord says to Joshua, who led the crowd of people into the Promised Land, he who is the image of Jesus (the Greek spelling of Joshua is the same as for Jesus), that each one must follow the whole Law, an impossible requirement therefore – which could only be accomplished in Jesus Messiah. We do not and cannot understand what all of the Law implicates, and yet it is written:

> «« Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to 'all the Law', which Moses my servant commanded: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper whithersoever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth; but you shall meditate therein day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written therein Then you will know prosperity and happiness in all your undertakings. (The Book of the Law was the forerunner then of the Bible.) »» (Jos. 1:7-8)

Finally, we may say that the Christian life does not begin with a fathoming of the truth or from an intellectual point of view trying to understand an important doctrine, but it begins with an opening of the eyes of the heart. No one has ever been converted and saved on intellectual reasoning alone. Acceptance is the key word, not knowledge, for unconstrainedly choosing God, who has called us into a love relationship. Only later does the deepening of our knowledge come into play. He is the bridegroom (from the Song of Songs) longing for his bride. As long as there is life, there is hope, there is hope for each and every one of us who knows God incompletely, or not at all, to be exalted through the curved way of God's longsuffering. It is a roundabout way, and that requires patience, first of all from God who, like no other, oversees all the missteps and afflictions suffered by a human being.

See also Youtube: **"Free Will and the Existence of Evil"** by Ravi Zacharias.

105) First Fruits of Zion: The Weekly eDrash, May 3, 2016

The Kingdom of God

A branch springs forth from the stump of Jesse,
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord
He will delight in the fear of the Lord.
He breathes awe of the Lord.
He does not judge according to outward appearances
and He does not pass judgment on the basis of idle rumors;
He gives justice to the humble,
and the poor in the land receive a fair judgment.
He chastens the oppressors with the rod of his mouth,
and the wicked He slays with the breath of his lips.
Justice He wears as a girdle around his loins,
and faithfulness as a girdle around his hips.
The wolf and the lamb dwell together,
the panther reclines beside the buck,
the calf and the lion graze together:
a little boy can herd them.
The cow and the bearess make friendship,
their young lie down together.
And the lion eats straw, as does the ox.
The infant plays near the cobra's den,
and the infant will put its hand into the viper's nest.
No one does evil
Or act corruptly on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.

(Isaiah 11:1-9)

APPENDIX 16

From messages of the Book of Truth

The Book of Truth contains a series of heavenly messages received by a married woman and mother of a young family living in Ireland. She is known as **Maria Divine Mercy**. Her messages started in November 2010, and at the time of the writing of this article, were still going on.

God the Father: I gave you the Gift of free will, but you abused it

• June 11th 2014

I taught you through the prophets. I gave you the Gift of free will, but you abused it to satisfy your own lusts and desires. The Gift of free will has a dual purpose – to give you the freedom to choose, so that you do not come to Me out of fear, but out of love; and to defeat the power of the devil. It is your free will that Satan covets most of all and he will use every deceit to get you to hand it over to him. When souls do this, through the sin of pride, New Age practices and the occult, they become enslaved by the evil one (waardoor ze niet of nauwelijks nog voor het goede kunnen kiezen). He will then manifest, within the souls who hand him over their free will, every single one of his traits. You will know them by their behaviour. But the one sign that their free will has been given to the evil one is when these souls constantly seek to publicly mock my Son, Jesus Christ, and his Mother, the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of the World. Satan despises both of them.

If, instead, you use the free will I gave you, for the good of your soul and to love one another, this is a powerful means by which to dilute the power of Satan. But, it is those souls who give to Me, through my Son, Jesus Christ, the gift of their free will, that give the most powerful gift of all. (see Crusade Prayer 123) It will be through these souls that I will defeat the evil one and get the means by which I can save the souls of those who have completely separated themselves from Me. Comment: If someone gives over his free will to God, He will then manifest in that person every single one of His traits.

That is my Promise. I will save the souls of even the most hopeless cases because of the sacrifices of those who give Me this gift of their free will, through my Son, Jesus Christ.

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Jesus: About the State of Grace and the Forgiveness of Sins

• December 21st, 2011

My dearest beloved daughter it is I,

Tonight I come to offer comfort to sinners who believe they are not worthy to stand before Me. I call on those of you, poor tortured souls who believe that your sins are so repulsive that I could not forgive you. How wrong you are. Don't you know that there is not one sin I cannot forgive? Why are you so afraid? Don't you know that even the most grevious sin of murder can be forgiven? All sins can and will be forgiven if true heartfelt remorse is shown.

I am waiting. Open your hearts to Me. Confide in Me. I am probably the only true friend you have in that you can tell me anything and it will not shock Me.

Sin is a fact of life. Very few souls including chosen souls can remain in a state of grace for any length of time.

Never feel that you cannot confess your sins, irrespective as to how serious they may be. If you fear Me and continue to turn your back you will distance yourself from Me even more. Many of My children do not feel worthy of My love. Yet I love everyone including hardened sinners. I do not condone the sin. I could never do that. But I love the sinner.

It was because of sin that I was sent into your world as a Saviour so that you could be pardoned. To be pardoned you must ask for forgiveness. When you seek forgiveness you must be humble first. For without humility there is no true remorse.

I, your Saviour, beg you to stop and think about how you live your life. You either love God by your good deeds and love of neighbour or you don't. You do not have to know Me in order to love Me, children. By your works, your love of each other, the kindness and generosity you show others you demonstrate your love for Me without realising it. It will also be through your humility of heart, when you show true remorse for all the wrongdoings in your life, that you will also prove your love for Me. How else do you think, you can become close to my heart?

You must never be afraid to approach Me. I am never far away. Come to Me now so I can nourish your soul and give you the peace you crave.

Your beloved Jesus

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APPENDIX 17

SEMINAR BY PROF. EDGAR ANDREWS ON THE SUBJECT OF CREATION OR EVOLUTION

Prof. Edgar Andrews, and at the right Frans Gunnink, President of Logos Feb. 23 2018 - photo Peter Busscher

The subject of 'creation or evolution' is in quite a storm. Books on the subject abound, with authors not sparing each other's penmanship. British Professor Edgar Andrews wrote "What is Man?" In February 2018 he gave a lecture in the Netherlands on the occasion of the presentation of his book in Dutch translation.

Publisher Maatkamp in the Netherlands, signed off on this latest book by Andrews, which is basically an expansion of his 2009 book "Who Made God?" Both can be read independently. It is noteworthy, by the way, that the Dutch edition of "What is Man?" came earlier on the market than the English one.

It was a very interesting lecture where we got to know something of the person behind the writer. The theme of this lecture was the historicity of the first human beings, Adam and Eve, which was entirely within the context of his publication. There were about fifty listeners. The response was unanimously enthusiastic and many books were sold. One can look back on a successful evening.

About the author

Edgar Andrews is professor emeritus of materials science at the University of London. He was trained as a physicist. In 1967 he founded the department of materials science at Queen Mary College of the University of London, a department of the faculty of engineering sciences, of which he later became dean. He has published more than a hundred scientific studies and books. If there is anyone who can cross swords with the evolutionists it is he.

A year after Edgar Andrews published his last book, the famous phycisist Stephen Hawking (1942-2018), together with Leonard Mlodinow, came out with the popular science book "The Grand Design". Andrews' review of Hawkings' book was actually the first step in writing his own book that followed "What is Man?". The central thesis of Hawking was expressed as follows, which Andrews quoted verbatim from memory: *"Because there are laws such as gravity, the Universe can and did create itself from nothing. (...) It is not necessary to invoke God to light the blue touch paper and set the Universe going." "But* (said Andrews) *if indeed there are laws that direct the events of things then there must be a mind, God's mind, to think up those laws. Hawking's thesis is therefore flawed."* This is superbly shown by his latest book, of which he defined its purpose as follows: *"It has to raise a banner against materialism and the materialistic interpretation about the origin, nature and destiny of humankind. God is absolute in all his doings, but from the materialistic viewpoint there is no place for the spiritual and absolute." "My ultimate desire* (Andrews said) *is to proclaim by means of my writings the ultimate riches of Christ."*

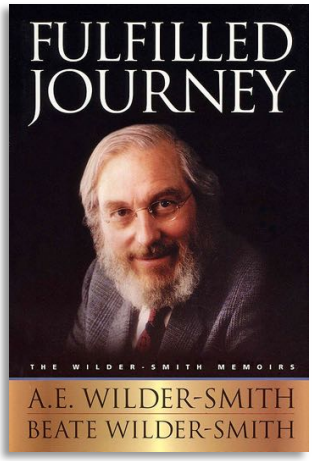
I would add that since there are laws governing the Universe, the empty space in which the material Universe expands must have already existed with its mathematical rules before matter made its appearance (from the starting point, called singularity, which was the communis opinio in 2010). That there could exist a self-contained infinite space (a referential) before the emergence of the Big Bang was rejected by Einstein. According to Einstein, space came into existence as a result of the Bing Bang. An empty space in which all natural laws were confined was too esoteric for Einstein, who rejected the God of the Bible.

Dr. Andrews, along with fellow contestant Dr. Arthur Wilder-Smith, participated in the notorious Huxley Memorial Debate at the Oxford Union in 1986, where they engaged in a passionate debate with renowned evolutionary biologists Richard Dawkins and John Maynard Smith. In 2006 there was a sequel of sorts in San Diego with the "Beyond Belief Conference: science, reason, religion & survival", where the big talking point was 'intelligent design'. The creationists were not invited. Nevertheless, there was critical commentary. One of the attendees of an orthodox Jewish background, Melvin Konner, was Professor of Anthropology and Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology; he condemned the San Diego conference in what he saw as overly simplistic representations of religion. He said that the event came to resemble a *"den of vipers"* debating whether to *"bash religion with a crowbar or only with a baseball bat."* (source Wikipedia)

A spanking

It is quite evident why the creationists were not invited to the San Diego Conference, as the evolutionists got a spanking in 1986 when 37% of the undergraduates voted in favor of 'creation' (115 for, 198 against). Dawkins felt compelled to give an impassioned plea right after the debate ended and before the voting took place, in which he *"implored"* (the very word Dawkins used) the voting audience *"not to give a single vote for the creationists position, for every vote in favor of creationism would be a blot on the escutcheon of ancient University of Oxford."* No wonder Dawkins now refuses to debate with creationists!

By the way, the anti-creation organization, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, publishes false data on their website: 115 votes were changed in 15. One thing is certain: the chairman counting the votes spoke of hundred fifty votes, not hundred fifteen! After the vote, Richard Dawkins proceeded to attack Wilder-Smith personally as being *"a Christian fundamentalist"*. Edgar Andrews brought up a point of order that no religious considerations should be brought up, as was agreed before-



hand, and the President of Oxford Union agreed - and Richard Dawkins had to sit down again. Maynard Smith then stood up and said he was glad that Wilder-Smith stuck with pure science in the debate, which Maynard Smith stated was *"impeccable"*. Dawkins continued that *"Wilder-Smith believes in a small tribal god, which is not acceptable in today's enlightened society."* He claimed that he and his friends believe the whole big universe is God himself, which he boasted was a superior belief to Wilder-Smith's belief. It comes as no surprise that all references to the debate, as if it had never taken place, was expunged from the university records! Wilder-Smith comments on the conference in his posthumus book from 1998, "Fulfilled Journey":

> «« The debate was never published. Surprisingly, as most Oxford Union debates are given nationwide publicity in the press, in radio and in television. There may well be some cogent reason for the total cover-up which the whole debate subsequently experienced. (…) In December 1986, I received an inquiry from the Radcliffe Science Library, Oxford, asking if I had ever really held a Huxley Memorial Lecture on Febr. 14, 1986. No records of my having held the lecture as part of the Oxford Union Debate could be found in any library. No part of the official media breathed a word about it. So total is the current censorship on any effective criticism of Neo-Darwinian science and on any genuine alternative! »» (p. 484)

Evolution theory is a terrible lie

When my Father created the world so that He could have a family, much preparation was made. He created the earth, the seas, the plants, the trees, the mountains, the rivers, the animals and then, on the second last day, when all was in place in Paradise, He created Man. Man, while stained with sin, is a sacred creature. Animals are there to serve mankind. Man did not evolve from animals but that is what those, who do not believe in God, would have you believe. Evolution theories, which claim that man came from animals, is a lie. They can never be proved.

Satan, his fallen angels and every devil which springs from the enemy of God, has convinced man of this terrible lie. Man is a child of God but in order to demean the human child of God, Satan wants to create confusion in the hearts of humanity. Why does he promote this lie through false teachings? So he can prove that man evolved from apes and then convince them that they were not created by the Hand of my Eternal Father. This is one of the greatest lies perpetrated by the devil, using the souls of those men who claim they are more intelligent than the rest of their brothers and sisters.

Word of Jesus, June 21st 2012 (Book of Truth)
to MDM (Maria Divine Mercy)

No science but philosophy

Edgar Andrew's fellow combattant, Arthur Wilder-Smith, who died in 1995, saw it as his task to explain on a scientific basis that life on earth could not possibly have arisen by any chance and that humans have not evolved from apes. In 1968, his bestseller came out: "Man's origin, man's destiny: a critical survey of the principles of evolution and Christianity", a book I devoured at the time. It is, of course, one thing to believe

in the Bible, but quite another to offer scientific arguments regarding the creation story. But the establishment does not appreciate. It is a sad statement of fact that the modern day scientist, if he wants to make a career, has to remain indifferent to the force of forces: 'God'. Instead of looking for it, he deliberately has to deny it, at least to ignore it.

In his presentation Edgar Andrews challenged materialism and the atheistic dogma as the substratum of their so called 'scientific method'. The variety and richness of life is dazzling. The real miracle is that simple natural laws could never be in a position to create such an extraordinary and varied world, and also that one of nature's own creatures is capable of understanding of how they and their environment came to be. The materialistic viewpoint most scientists believe in isn't science, it's philosophy. In all honesty, it's a form of religion, for if something cannot be proven and is adhered to at all costs, it's religion. What Edgar Andrews demonstrates, already in "Who made God", is that the most likely position, by far and large, is that there is a God who created everything, from the tiniest microscopic beings to the largest, and not only the living beings but also the material objects.

The awesome dust mite (Electron Microscope - ariken777 # Oct. 20 2022)
Dust mites are invisible to the human eye.

Edgar Andrews told the audience that even the scientists in the camp of 'intelligent design' refuse to admit that this intelligence might be God. Whatever, most scientists do not believe in God, which can be substantiated by surveys. The Scientific American of September 1999 reported such a survey among the 1800 members of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences (NAS), which showed that 90% of the respondents do not believe in an afterlife and in a personal God, a percentage that in 2010 hovered around 93%. The above article, "Scientists and Religion in America", quotes Rodney Stark, an early social researcher on the spread of secularisation in a religious society:

> «« *"There's been two hundred years of marketing that if you want to be a scientific person you've got to keep your mind free of the fetters of religion."* He argued that (…) higher education on the whole winnows out the idea of God and people who hold to it. In research universities, *"the religious people keep their mouths shut",* Stark says, *"and the irreligious people discriminate. There's a reward system to being irreligious in the upper echelons."* »».

It would have been interesting if the survey had asked a follow-up question to the 10% of the respondents who believed in a personal God: whether their belief had relevance

to the work they were doing in science. Probably the greater majority of them would have answered no. The same article states that in 1981 the NAS issued a policy statement on the question of 'creation science' in the biology classes of public schools: *"Religion and science are separate and mutually exclusive realms of human thought whose presentation in the same context leads to misunderstanding of both scientific theory and religious belief."* This is consistent with Pope Pius X's 1907 encyclical:

> «« Faith and science are separate in the Modernist and thus heretical sense. They would have nothing at all to do with each other since faith deals with matters that are scientifically unknowable [it is claimed]. Consequently, each has its own field of fire: faith limits itself to divine reality, to what 'cannot' be observed; in turn, science limits itself to what 'can' be observed. [Unjustly,] one infers from this that each is in its own field, and since they are hermetically sealed from each other they can never meet. »» (Pascendi 2:3)

The NAS members do not see the relevance of belief to science because they have closed their eyes to it or are not accustomed to think along those lines. Richard Dawkins, who likened belief in God to a belief in fairy tales, sums up the dilemma quite pointedly by stating that he considers it intellectually dishonest to live with contradictions such as doing science during the week and attending church on sunday. I do agree with him as concerns the dishonesty (of most present day scientist), but that does not negate the point of view that belief and science should and can be integrated. But, of course, that is unthinkable for people like Dawkins and his band of followers. There is certainly an overlap taking into account that both disciplines have their capabilities and limitations. In symbiosis they will reinforce rather than detract from each other.

Living in fellowship with God

Professor Edgar Andrews adstruates:

> «« If there is no activity of God in bringing things into being then there is no purpose or meaning in the life of a human being. Life is then a driftwood onto the shores of time by a blind process of evolution. Then there is no purpose, no meaning, no future. The position we take as to whether things came into being by creation or evolution effects the way we look upon our own life and upon other people. If on the other hand the whole of humanity is descended from the first two human beings, we have in ourselves the image of God, as Adam and Eve were created in the image of God. And thus we have the capacity to have a fellowship with God, which animals don't have.
>
> The first chapters of Genesis are essentially meant to give us our identity. Our identity is stolen from us if we say that we are but clever apes. What is more, we have language and logic, formulate ideas and thought about things that even do not exist, and we have a moral compass. And that does not belong to animals [unless rudimentary]. My book was written to prove just that, that Adam and Eve are historical figures because it cannot be otherwise. »»

Generally speaking, the modern scientist is an agnost. Agnosticism is the doctrine of not being able to know the deeper reality of things. The agnostic claims that God's existence cannot be deduced from visible things. Paul writes to the contrary in the letter to the Romans. As a result, within this system there are no reasonable arguments for believing in the Biblical God and even less in the Bible as a scientific oak point. Edgar Andrews is a loner in the scientific milieu because he dares to believe in God and to take the Holy Scriptures as a scientific reference and to publicly exhibit that. We may note that his approach has seen its fruit. In the same encyclical, Pope Pius X teaches the following about the Bible as a book of truth: (Pascendi 6:3)

«« We may, honorable brethren, acknowledge only one single truth, the only one, which is that the sacred books, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have God as their originator. Otherwise, we declare, this would be tantamount to attributing occasional or unofficial lies to God [a quick lie]. We say along with Augustine: If with so exalted an authority only a single unofficial lie is accepted, no part of the sacred books remains out of danger. This is all the more true of texts which seem to present problems in their practical application or which are difficult to believe. Only if we reject intentional lies by the author anywhere can this thorny issue be circumvented. If such a thing were accepted (argues Augustine), each person could decide at his own discretion whether to accept or reject this or that matter." »»

Without human intervention

This brings us to the question of how Professor Edgar Andrews came to faith. He addressed this after the lecture during an interview with "Weet Magazine" (Know Magazine). He explained that it was in his sophomore year in college, when he was 19 years old, that he came to a living faith through reading the New Testament, remarkably without human intervention. Suddenly he had a tremendous hunger to start reading the New Testament, at the urging of the Holy Spirit - as he realized only later. Until then, he had been totally uninterested in religion. At school, Edgar was the worst in the class for religion while excelling in all other subjects. This conversion has played a decisive role in his life ever since. His first book for a general readership was published in 1978 when he was 45 years old. That was a Christian book for teenagers. Two years later he published "God, Science and Evolution", in which he wiped the floor with the Darwinian theory of evolution. Since then, he has played a key role in the "creation or evolution" debate. His publications in this field kept coming, and for that we should be quite grateful, for a rationally based counterbalance to the pushy evolutionists is absolutely necessary. The questioners after the lecture were especially interested in theological questions to which Prof. Andrews answered with solid references and quotes from his vast ready knowledge of the Bible.

It should be mentioned that during the Huxley Memorial Debate no theological arguments were allowed in the sense of: "The Bible says this and therefore it is so." In his writings Professor Andrews adheres to this principle as well. Based on logical argumentation and scientific data, he shows that creation is the only acceptable way out. To illustrate this point, he told that the spontaneous DNA-mutation rate of chimpansees is 50% faster than of humans, while it should have been the reverse, if indeed a race of apes from a common ancestor evolved into a so-called 'clever ape'.

A number of remarkable quotes from the interview by Weet Magazine:

Nature has a tremendous testimony as to the reality and creatorship of God.

Christianity without miracles is no Christianity. Creation from nothing (i.e. from God) is a miracle and must be understood as a miracle.

No scientific arguments exist against creation.

Theistic evolution is not in accordance with the first eleven chapters of Genesis, where creation is described as a historical event.

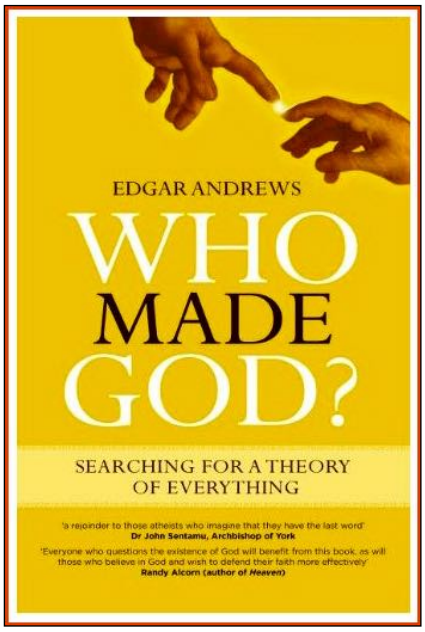
Intelligent design versus Biblical creation robs God of his glory.

The evolutionist says that the only thing that is real are the physical objects, matter in reality, and so the brain is real, not so the mind; the universe is real, not so a creator.

‘Who Made God’

Searching for a Theory of Everything

By Professor Edgar H. Andrews # Sept. 2009. The author is Emeritus Professor of Materials at the University of London and an international expert on the science of large molecules.


EDGAR ANDREWS
WHO MADE GOD?
SEARCHING FOR A THEORY OF EVERYTHING
'a rejoinder to those atheists who imagine that they have the last word'
Dr John Sentamu, Archbishop of York
'Everyone who questions the existence of God will benefit from this book, as will those who believe in God and wish to defend their faith more effectively'
Randy Alcorn (author of Heaven)

The Christian Book Publisher ‘EP Books’ has published another excellent book for the general public, translated in Dutch, also for those who are interested in science. Edgar Andrews has managed to explain difficult subjects in this book in an accessible language. *“Edgar Andrews”,* so says the Principal of the London Theological Seminary, Robert Strivens, *“demonstrates that a right understanding of the scientific approach poses no threat to Biblical Christianity - indeed, that the kind of world we live in is precisely what the Biblical account of God and creation would lead us to expect.”*

The author based the title of his book on a favorite question by sceptics: “If God made everything, then who made God?” Edgar Andrews starts with the hypothesis that God ‘exists’. After all, science always starts an investigation by setting a hypothesis. Then he proceeds with investigating to what extent scientific research confirms that hypothesis. This is a legitimate startingpoint, since that is how science ‘works’. You form a hypothesis and test it. In his book he frequently crosses swords with famous scientists such as Richard Dawkins and Stephen Hawking, who both deny the existence of God. Although God cannot actually be proven by the God-hypothesis, the God-hypothesis is much more defendable than to start with the hypothesis that God ‘does not exist’. Science is still looking for the all-inclusive, all-encompassing theory. Scientists are frenetically banishing every possible proof that may indicate the existence of God, even when logic clearly points to a (divine) design. Who can be against that, for design can also be described in scientific jargon!!

For the God-hypothesis, and therefore for the purpose of this book, the author uses as his startingpoint four things that are scientifically unexplainable: (1) the origin of the universe, (2) the origin of the laws of nature, (3) the origin of life and (4) the origin of mind and thought. These four ‘irregularities’ are sublimely worked out by the author. For the first two points Andrews uses many arguments that have already been addressed in quite a number of books by other authors, but with which the reader need not be familiar. The last part deals with morality, which relates to the contents of our thoughts. This belongs to the Biblical territory. How remarkably that this is presented scientifically!

The third principle, about the origin of life, is fascinating. It deals with the basic building blocks of life as they are layed down in our genetic code. Until today I have never read such a well substantiated argument about this subject. Edgar Andrews poses that

chemistry, or biochemistry, doesn't contain information in or by itself: DNA is the information-carrier that needs a 'dictionary' to be understood: in itself some kind of digital combination means nothing. It is the meaning attached to it that makes it sensible. So there must have been someone, some power, to add that kind of information to the chemical compounds and make them 'workable' or 'functional'. As a matter of fact, in the 'primeordeal soup', when it all started, amino acids cannot exist and break down immediately; the fluid in a cell, the cytoplasm or cell-matyrix, is not just a fluid: it is a universe in itself. This poses another and insurmountable problem, if we let nature do its work, having no purpose in mind, and push away God. Yet, according to the chemical script of DNA, life, as the observations testify, can and does arise in an infinite number of variations, and in doing so it also passes itself on to the next generations. This shows purpose and pre-ordination. The system is fitly framed together, it not soulless. DNA is the language of God. Therefore: God spoke (in a language) …and created.

I'd love to talk with Professor Andrews some time about other subjects. Let me mention just one of them. Andrews claims that mathematics (and therefore numbers too) *"is only the product of the human mind"* (ch. 10). Here he seems to agree with Richard Dedekind. In a paper dated 1887 and entitled "What are Numbers and What Do They Mean?" Dedekind defined numbers as a fabrication of the human mind. This view has been the current coin in science ever since. This view is justified if God 'does not exist'. Atheist Bertrand Russell followed the same idea and said *"physics is mathematics, not because we know so much about the physical world, but because we know so little about it. We can only discover its mathematical attributes."*, with which he sided with quantum physics maze, a choice that Randell Mills thereafter proved to be incorrect. Accepting that God 'exists', mathematics could be the language God uses to give the universe cohesion (through the laws of nature), from its most simple expression to the most convoluted reality, like embedded in the DNA-script. The mathematical formulas are thus the ultimate explanation for the phenomena we observe around us, even if those formulas seem to have no relation to our own sensory perceptions and imaginative powers.

O yes, you have guessed it already, my advise has a golden edge: an excellent book!

PART 6 – Ch.1

The Eucharist brought to us From Old Testament Times

Cardinal Raymond Burke (in bright red) participates in the traditional rite

What riches to receive Jesus-Host, to become ourselves a living Host, a dwelling for God who advances in our souls laden with gold, frankincense and myrrh! Gold as the image of imperishable life, frankincense of a pleasing and sacrificial walk of life, and myrrh of the medicine for our souls. This important ever-repeating event was already foretold in the Old Testament. How could it be any other way? Psalm 136:25 reads in modified punctuation: "He (Yahweh) gives all nations the bread that is Flesh." Moshje the Preacher thereby notes, referring back to Psalm 34:9: "Taste and see how good Jehovah is. For the bread He gives to all is his own Flesh. And while the taste announces bread, it is turned into Flesh."

43 – The Bread is His own Flesh

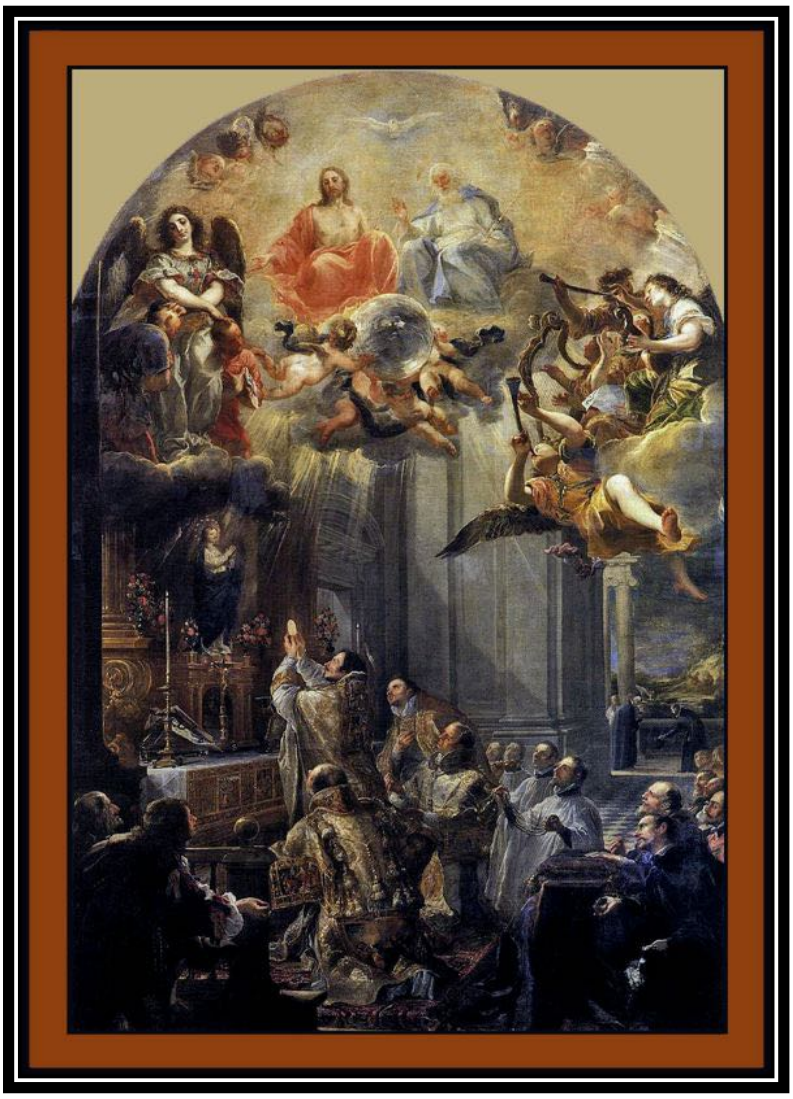
They said: *"This language repels us. Who can listen to it?"* For this reason, many of his disciples withdrew from Him. That was at the occasion of Jesus announcing the institution of the Holy Eucharist, in words admittedly difficult to grasp. He said, John 6:48-58 in paraphrase:

«« I am the living Bread that came down from heaven, not like the manna that the Israelites ate and yet they died. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. The bread that I will give is my Flesh that I will give for the life of the

> world. If you do not eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink his Blood, you will not have life in you. For my Flesh is real food and my Blood is real drink. Whoever eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood remains in Me and I in him. »»

For God's Ancient People it was difficult to accept that Jesus invited them to drink his Blood, whereas on the Old Testament's prohibition they had developed a natural aversion to it. Of course, they did not know that Jesus' Blood would be brought to them in the outward form of wine. Leviticus 17:14 says: *"For the life of man and beast is his blood, and therefore I (Yaweh) have said to the Israelites to never eat the blood of man nor beast."* But since the life – the Life of Jesus Himself – is in his Blood, this is an extremely important argument for a Christian to do just that (the teaching goes that not only the wine is the Blood, but that the Host also contains traces of Christ's Blood). Acts 15:28-29 also prohibits the consumption of blood, for Christians, that is. In this instance, the consumption of the Eucharistic Blood is an exception to the rule.

Jesus said this while teaching in the synagogue of Capernaum. A little earlier, after the miraculous multiplication of bread, described in the same chapter 6 of John, it says that the Jews were murmuring about Him, because He had said: *"I am the bread that came down from Heaven.*" Jesus told this after making a comparison with the manna that kept coming down from heaven during the forty years' trek through the desert.



Fecit Juan Carreno de Miranda

The Eucharist has always been, and still is, a point of contention within the Church throughout the centuries. Faith may be beyond reason but, according to the redoubters, nothing should go against reason. So it was then and so it is now. A God who is creator, a God who is omnipotent, a loving God, a God who does miracles, yes in that we believe, but He must adhere to the limits of logic, that is, our logic. But be honest, was the manna that came down from heaven, for forty years!, within the bounds of reason? It certainly was not, as is often claimed, coriander seed, otherwise it would not have said that *"it was 'like' coriander seed"* (Num. 11:7), and if so they would not have called it manna, which in Hebrew means 'what?' Our best explanation for the Holy Eucharist is also 'what?' We don't know. It is beyond our understanding. We have a word for that: mystery. And for that Heavenly gift fits only one attitude, reverence and thanksgiving. And of course, you know that Eucharist means thanksgiving.

Obviously, the manna during the desert journey was a miracle from God, time and again. It was no ordinary bread. We have come to understand that it was the prototype of the Eucharistic bread. It is an established theological principle that the prototype is always less than its New Testament fulfillment. Even the manna was no ordinary bread, but in terms of a miracle this is vastly surpassed by the Eucharistic bread. And so it is perfectly acceptable, theologically, that the sanctified 'bread' is the transsubstantiated Body of our beloved Lord and Saviour.

The crowds that Jesus addressed the day after the multiplication of bread, consisted of the common people. In the Biblical record we see no dispute with the scribes. Not even later. Could hardly be, because the teaching about the bread being meat was not unscriptural. It is remarkable, which cannot have escaped the scribes, that the Hebrew for preaching the good news (evangelion) is the word basar (or hat-besar) which also means 'meat'. And since they taught that Hebrew is a God-given language, also spoken by the angels, they knew that this association could not be coincidental. Moreover, they must have been familiar with the reading of the "Great Hallel Psalm" (Ps. 136). Hallel is Hebrew for 'praise' and recurs in 'hallelujah' (praise the Lord).[106)] Psalm 136 was sung frequently and enthusiastically because of its simple and compelling rhythm. By punctuating the third Hebrew word in verse 25 (the punctiation is optional), the translation becomes: *"He (Yahweh) gives all nations the bread that is Flesh."* Here, Moshje the Preacher refers to Psalm 34:9, quoted in 1 Peter 2:3: *"Having tasted that the Lord is good."* And Moshe comments: *"Taste and see how good Yahweh is, for the bread He gives to all is his own Flesh. And while the taste announces bread, it is turned into Flesh."* [107)] This explains why the scribes did not challenge the Lord Jesus afterwards either. For the common public, Jesus' statement may have been too heavy an argument, not so for the educated, who can be blamed for keeping the people in the dark. Guardians of truth, they should also have been dispensers of truth. As far as the Jewish tradition is concerned, we have concentrated on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, but there is also a supporting tradition with regard to the Incarnation of God, which will not be discussed here, although the incarnation of God in a human body is equally difficult to understand as his incarnation in a small piece of bread.

It is inconceivable that Psalm 34 was not been written by King David, to which he could have found inspiration by the hymn of 1 Chronicles 16, aspects of which are also incorporated into other psalms, especially Psalms 96, 105, 106 and 117. Psalm 34 reflects a soul's delight and can only be fully appreciated by God-fearing and grateful hearts. The song begins with a threefold praise to the Holy Trinity. This is followed in six verses by a praise to the six-day work of creation followed by six more on the deliverance from Egypt, image of the demonic domination of God's work of creation. Seven verses follow on the journey through the desert on the way to the Promised Land. Humanity is now in the seventh (re)creation day (that consists of 7,000 years). This desert journey is image of that day. It ends with two verses of personal thanksgiving for the mercies received. And then comes the apotheosis with the veiled announcement of the Holy Eucharist that raises to never-ending praise. The fact that this Psalm consists of 26 verses is not accidental, for that is the numerical value of Yahweh, God's Holy Name, dwelling in his fullness in the Host.

Regarding Jesus' comment about drinking his Blood, his critics could bring to mind the remarkable ceremony during the Feast of Tabernacles at the time and consider that behind Jesus' words may have been hidden a deeper meaning. What was the case? The water from Shiloach functioned in a remarkable ceremony during the Feast of Tabernacles. Each day of the seven-day festival, water taken from Shiloach – a word that means 'the One Sent' or by implication 'the Messiah' – was solemnly placed, together with some wine, in two cups on the Temple Altar in Jerusalem and through orifices in the bottom of these cups the water and the wine were emptied out simultaneously as a libation, which was greeted as a prefiguration of the out-pouring of the Spirit of the

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106) The Hallel are those sets of psalms recited liturgically in the Jewish practice: Psalms 145-150, the so-called Daily Hallel, are recited each morning; Psalm 136, the Great Hallel, is recited on Shabbat and holidays and is part of the Passover seder. Psalms 113-118, the best-known Hallel, known more fully as the Egyptian Hallel, are recited on holidays and get their name from Psalm 114:1, which celebrates the moment "when Israel left Egypt". The hymn in 1 Chronicles 16 was sung at the inauguration of the Ark of the Covenant in Jerusalem. Psalm 136, on the other hand, was sung at the dedication ceremony of the Temple of Solomon. (2 Chron. 7:1-6) David will probably have written it for this occasion, although not allowed to build the Temple himself.

107) The writings of Moshje the Preacher (Mosché Ha-Darshan of Narbonne) have been lost. He is widely quoted by Rashi. To Rashi, through De Leira, we owe contemporary Christian Biblical interpretation. Le Chevalier P.L.H. Drach – the prospective chief rabbi of Paris who had converted to the Roman Catholic faith – quotes a number of sayings of Moshje the Preacher, including his Hebrew commentary on Psalm 136:25, taken from Raymond Martin's "Pugio fidei" and Petrus Galatinus' "Arcana catholicae veritatis". Moshje haDarshan/the Preacher (Hebrew: משה הדרשן) was the director of the rabbinic chool (yeshiva) of Narbonne. Though he was considered a rabbinical authority, he owes his reputation mainly to the fact that together with Tobiah ben Eliezer he was the most prominent of symbolic exegesis (derash) in the 11th century.

The Jewish scholar Rashi (1040-1105) is still one of the most esteemed exegetes of Scripture and the Talmud. He concentrated on the 'simple meaning of the Bible' with emphasis on aspects of philology, grammar and sentence structure, with the occasional insertion of a mystical exposition here and there. This marked a new trend in exegesis, and not only for Jewish circles. Through Nicolas of Lyra (1265-1349), a Franciscan monk in Paris, this approach greatly influenced Reformation and later Catholic exegesis. Lyra, who possessed an exceptionally good knowledge of the Hebrew language and Judaica, wrote the "Postillæ", which, based on the principles of Rashi, contains a detailed explanation of each Bible verse individually or group of verses. (See "Rashi and the Christian Scholars" by H. Hailperin - Pittsburgh # 1963)

Messiah. (Sukka 4:5, 4:9, 53:1) This was cause of tremendous joy. Here, Christians recognize the water and wine of the Holy Eucharist. It would come as a surprise if this Jewish ceremony had been kept up to the present day, because it would have proven too embarrassing for the Jews. In John 7:38, on Hosanna Rabba, the last day of Tabernacles, Jesus refers to Isaiah 12:3, promising the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In the Talmud (Jer. Sukka 55a) Joshua ben Levi says in his discussion of this libation: *"Why was it called place of drawing? Because from it they draw the prophetic inspiration, according to Isaiah 12:3: 'You will draw with joy from the fountains of salvation!'",* which refers also to Isaiah 8:6, a text where *"the waters of Shiloach go softly".* As for the libation ceremony of water and wine, it may well have been a remnant of an archaic rain ceremony that was customary practice in the Fertile Crescent, which significance is still attached to it in the promised Time of Nations, or Reign of Peace, addressed in Zechariah 14:17-19:

> «« No rain shall fall on the land of anyone in any country who refuses to go to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord Allmighty. This horrible disaster will also strike the Egyptians [who are not dependent on rain, but on their river], and everyone else who refuses to go there for keeping the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that do not participate in the Feast of Tabernacles. »»

44 – In the Eternal Present Tense – the way of the martyr

The observation of Moshje the Preacher regarding Psalm 34 fits perfectly well with the interpretation of the very first sacrifice mentioned in the Bible, that of Abel. To this end, Abel chose the firstborn of his lambs, the best from his stable. Now here it comes! The Hebrew for blood or meat sacrifice is korban, but for this one, only this one time, the Hebrew minchah is used, as described in Numbers 15:4: *"a flour offering mixed with oil."* The rabbis recognize that this cannot be an error in the sacred text. Therefore, it must have a deep meaning connected to it. This unique exception indicates that the Old Testament flour offering, the minchah, which each time had to be brought together with a meat offering, referred back to that one lamb that Abel had offered to God. Abel's offering, which was consumed by heavenly fire,[108)] was thus a sacrifice in the eternal present tense. Once brought, it always remained in God's mind. It required no repetition. All later minchah flour offerings would refer back to it. The korban blood sacrifices, on the other hand, which accompanied a minchah, did not point back, but forward, to that Good Friday of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, which by the application of the Blood of Jesus speaks of better things than the blood shed by Abel.

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108) Abel's sacrifice was consumed by heavenly fire, Jewish tradition teaches, as well as the Book Yasher, which is an apocryphal book, twice mentioned in the Bible. Only after the Flood did God allow meat to be eaten; thus the slaughter of livestock was foreign to Abel. Therefore, it may be assumed that he did not build an altar or kill the beast and thus did not soil his hands with blood, even from beasts. Jewish tradition reasons that he laid his lamb tied on the ground and left the rest to God. He must have thought: "God will surely deliver the lamb from its suffering, which so plaintively cries out for its mother." Because heavenly fire consumed his sacrifice, Cain knew that Abel's sacrifice was pleasing to God. Because Cain's offering remained untouched, he became angry. The Willibrord translation reads: "A wild anger seized Cain." But Cain did not deserve otherwise, for the book of Jasher tells us that he had offered inferior fruit from his field. He must have thought that it was a stupid thing to do, to just lay anything on the ground. We would say a waste of money. That God responded in this way must have surprised him. His jealous rage was not lessened by it. See also 1 Kings 18:20-39, where Elijah does an altar-test against the Baal prophets with their 450 men.

Psalm 136, the Great Hallel (hymn of praise)

(…) A solemn prayer of thanksgiving, known as the Great Hallel Psalm, is traditionally sung at the end of the Jewish Passover meal and was probably also prayed by Jesus at the Last Supper celebrated with his disciples (when He instituted the Holy Eucharist). In fact, the annotation of the Evangelists: "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives", would seem to allude to it. The horizon of praise thus appears to illumine the difficult path to Golgotha. The whole of this Psalm unfolds in the form of a litany, marked by the antiphonal refrain (26x): "… for his steadfast love endures for ever".

The many wonders God worked in human history and his continuous intervention on behalf of his people are listed in the composition. Furthermore, to every proclamation of the Lord's saving action the antiphon responds with the basic impetus of praise. The eternal love of God, is a love which, in accordance with the Hebrew term that is used here, is suggestive of fidelity, mercy, kindness, grace and tenderness. That is the unifying motif of the entire Psalm. The refrain always takes the same form, whereas the regular paradigmatic manifestations of God's love change: creation, liberation through the Exodus, the gift of land, and the Lord's provident and constant help for his people and generally for every created being.

(…) We must keep ever present in our mind the memory of the great things He has also worked in our personal lives: his mercy endures for ever. And if today I am immersed in the dark night, tomorrow He sets me free, for his mercy is eternal. Let us return to the Psalm, because at the end it returns to the Creation. The Lord, it says: **"gives food to all flesh, for his steadfast love endures for ever"**. (v. 25)

(…) The invisible power of the Creator and Lord of which the Psalm sings, is revealed in the humble sign of the bread He gives, with which He enables us to live [according to his Wil]. **And so it is that this daily bread symbolizes and sums up the love of God as Father that brings us to the fulfilment of the New Testament, to that 'Bread of Life', the Eucharist,** which accompanies us in our lives as faithful, anticipating the ultimate joy of the messianic banquet in Heaven.

Brothers and Sisters, **the lay-out of Psalm 136 made us contemplate with praise and blessing the most important stages in the history of salvation, to arrive at the Paschal Mystery in which God's saving action reaches its climax**. Let us therefore celebrate with grateful joy the Creator, Saviour and faithful Father, who "so loved the world that He gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life". (John 3:16) In the fullness of time, the Son of God became man to give life for the salvation of each one of us. He gave himself as bread in the Eucharistic mystery to enable us to enter his Covenant, which makes us his children. May both God's merciful goodness and his sublime "steadfast love for ever" reach far afield. I would therefore like to conclude this Catechesis by making my own, the words that St John wrote in his first letter, which we should always have in mind in our prayers: "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are!" (1 John 3:1)

From the sermon of Pope Benedict XVI on October 19, 2011
to the general audience on St. Peter's Square Rome.

It has been claimed that Abel's murder is a foreshadowing of the suffering on the Cross with the fine-sounding phrase 'sacrificer and sacrifice became one', but Abel's blood did not pronounce a blessing like Jesus', but revenge in the meaning of redemption, deliverance, reconciliation or a buying back (Strong's 1350: ga'al), and as a result the

earth was cursed. Says God to Cain: *"The blood of your brother cries out to Me from the ground!"* In the root text, blood is in the plural. Therefore, a common Jewish interpolation is: *"The voices of the bloodstains of the multitude of martyrs who will come forth from Abel, your brother, cry out to Me from the earth."* This is similar to the cries of the souls under the altar in the book of Revelation: *"How long, holy and true ruler, will You delay judgment and not avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?"* (6:10) So the korban sacrifices of sustenance pointed forward, but in fact those manifold sacrifices of sustenance were only an image of that which was to come and they could not procure true atonement. We are familiar with texts like in Psalm 51 and Hosea 6,[109] where God says He does not desire sacrifices (plural form) – messianic texts that only find their fulfillment in the Son. Jesus triumphator did just that. Because of Him, the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Mass is not a repeat offering, and yet Host means victim. (See Heb. 9:25-28 and 10:3) But because the innumerable Hosts of daily Mass offerings are inscribed as a memorial service in the eternal present tense, which also contained that one sacrifice of Abel, it is not a repeat sacrifice. In this sense, even Abel's testimony and martyrdom was not meaningless, for Christ is the king of martyrs, whose death is sanctified in Christ's martyrdom. *"Their blood is precious in His sight."* (Ps. 72:13-14) Where innocent blood flows, as Abel's did, the earth becomes holy in God's eyes. We may consecrate it post facto to the Son, Who will see to it that it is mixed with his own precious Blood.

Consecration is the change of bread and wine into the Flesh and Blood of Christ, while keeping the appearance of bread and wine. In the transsubstantiated bread God has acquired again the capacity for expiatory suffering just as 2000 years ago during his wanderings as the God-man, for God does not suffer expiatory in his glorious state or in his capacity of God only. The Catholic teaching states that God is imperturbable. I agree, but does that also mean that God cannot suffer in the Spirit, as if He were shut off from his amygdala? The answer is no, because God can and will suffer for, in and with the suffering, even in his glorified Body.[110] After all, a body always remains a body with the whole spectrum of possibilities, which are intrinsically tied to the spiritual.

The Consecration during worship is 'the same and only sacrifice' of Golgotha. It is a commemorative service, inscribed in the eternal present time. To be sure Christ has been sacrificed once, but just as the imperfect sacrifice of the old covenant of Moses made remember the sins, the sins under the New Covenant make Him remember the unique sacrifice. This recalls what psychology knows as a post-traumatic reaction. For the victims of concentration camps their one-time experience will never become past tense. Their ordeal never ends. Once a thing recalls their traumatic experience the ordeal revives, as if happening now.[111] The person is transported back to his original emotional condition, which is the typical feature of a post-traumatic stress reaction.

Because sinning is perpetual, so too Christ's sacrifice is perpetual and real – in the memorial service of the Holy Mass. The apostle Paul uses terms such as being crucified with Christ as if at present He is still being crucified and this is also in the vein of the

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109) It is interesting within the terms of our argument when God says in Hosea 6 that He desires no sacrifice, because immediately following, Adam's breaching of the covenant is mentioned. Adam's fall is like an irritating buzz that resounds throughout the entire history. So it is not far-fetched to see in the sacrifice of Abel, son of Adam, an allusion to the sacrifice of Christ.

110) As early as 1888, rhesus monkeys with a lesioned temporal brain cortex, including the amygdala (an organ shared by humans), were observed to have pronounced social and emotional deficits, which is to say that all emotions, positive and negative, belong to being a human in a bodily way, and why shouldn't the same be true for Jesus Christ, being human in its glorified state?

famous chapter three of Peter, saying: *"the just (...) being put to death in the flesh [like Christ], but [like Christ] quickened by the Spirit."* [112)] Christ's suffering and spiritual renewal, also our suffering and our renewal, are put together in one sentence. They blend into each other in a threefold way: Christ and we, his suffering and ours, his glorification and ours. And indeed, the Roman and Eastern Churches believe that each time during Consecration Christ's suffering is being renewed.

The sign of the cross, that horrible instrument of torture, has become a sign of love and power for our healing. It has become an instrument for reconciliation because the victim had the prayer of forgiveness on its lips. I fully comprehend that many despise this utter foolishness. It is so much easier to understand hatred than love. It seems… because the deepness of hatred is beyond comprehension. It is well known that exposure to a threatened death or serious injury can have a long lasting effect on the emotional well-being of the person involved, a traumatic effect that will be aggravated if the experience involves an intense feeling of helplessness. For instance: a boxer will experience a different psychological effect from injuries during a scheduled fight than a person who gets exactly the same injuries after being pounded on while being chained to a pole. The boxer may continue to live without emotional stress, while the other person, who in utter helplessness was chained to a pole, may develop a case of post-traumatic stress disorder. From this we may infer that it is always better to fight back, that means, take revenge. As concerns the second option we have seen the psychological effects on the survivors of the German extermination camps. Many of them were trapped in what we might call the gospel of vengeance. The Jewish revenge was seen as a *"holy duty",* called for in response to these atrocities.[113)]

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111) A post-traumatic reaction intervenes swiftly and wholly. This is shown by the following story. In 1997 the Dutchman Wim Alaerds set the world record of pole sitting at 51 days, which was a terrible ordeal. He tells: "I known from my personal experience that all the difficult moments return at one stroke once you start sitting on such a pole. In the beginning of 1998 I sat for three days during the Holiday fair in Utrecht. All points of pain surfaced immediately, in already the first minutes. I don't mind to have said right after my victory at the end of June 1997: 'This néver and néver again!'" (Telegraaf Daily Newspaper of 22 May 1998)

112) See 1 Pet. 3:17-18, and also Phil. 3:10-11, Kol. 1:24 & 2:12, Rom. 6:3-5 & 8:17-23, as well as 2 Cor. 4:11-14.

1 Corinthians 4:12-13 reads: *"Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being defamed, we entreat."* This is the way of the martyr who blesses, endures and entreats in favor of the aggressor 'at the very moment of aggression'. Jesus did the same while hanging on the Cross. While in the midst of being hurt we, as Christians, have the duty to forgive, to pray for and bless the agressor. That starts with a dedication of the mind and if humbly presented to God, He will see to it that it also becomes a condition of the heart. This manner also points the way to relive and reframe the bitterness of recurrent or suppressed memories of anguish in the fellowship of Christ's suffering. Isaiah 53:5 reads: *"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him. And with his **stripes** we are healed."* The word 'stripes' in this text is the translation of 'chaburah'. But that word can also be read as chavurah, which is found in the common greeting in Israel "Shalom Chaverim", which means so much as "Peace friends till we meet again". Shavurah means 'fellowship' and 'union'. Some have suggested therefore to render Isahiah 53:5 as: *"And by union with Him we are healed."* In the Torah Volume Three (by First Fruits of Zion) Ibn Crispin is quoted as saying that *"Although the Messiah is in the utmost distress from pain and sickness, yet by union and nearness to Him we are healed from all the diseases to which our afflictions give rise."* That accords to what the apostle Paul writes in his letter to the Philippians (3:10).

I bring to mind that at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, by the dedictive act called Consecration, the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. A suitable wording for this part of the Mass reads thus: "*Take and eat of this, all of you, for this is my Body, which shall be delivered up for you. (...) Take this cup and drink from it all, for this is the Chalice of my Blood, of the New and Perpetual Covenant - Mystery of Faith - which shall be shed for you and many for the remission of sins."* This reading is in the future tense (pronounced on the eve before Good Friday), conforming to the Greek root text of, for instance, Luke 22:19. It therefore points to the crucifixion yet to come. Holy Mass is a memorial service according to the command (same verse): *"Do this in remembrance of Me."* In so doing during Mass, the faithful participate materially in what the Apostles then experienced on the eve of the sacrifice of the Cross. And therefore, the wording should be in the future tense, which was common practice in the Roman Catholic Church until World War II. Afterwards, this was 'forgotten' in many versions of the prayer. They said something like this: *"...which is shed for you and many for the forgiveness of sins."* St. Thomas Aquinas called the Consecration a *"pre-sealing"* of the sufferings of our beloved Lord and Saviour. Just as 'then', the Consecration enclosed Christ's as yet unconsummated Sacrifice and elevated it above the moment of time. So the priest, whenever he utters the Consecration words, makes the impending Sacrifice of the Cross active in our present time. Of this, the apostle Paul says: *"For whenever you eat this bread and drink from the cup, you announce the Lord's death until He comes."* (1 Cor. 11:26) The importance of this exposition is that in this way it becomes clear how our sacrifices can share in Christ's Sacrifice. At Consecration, which at each instant happens somewhere in the world, our 'little' sacrifices are benevolently introduced by Christ into his Great Sacrifice of Good Friday. It remains fundamentally Christ's Sacrifice that thus makes our own pain and suffering valuable in God's eyes and by the same token assign this to what Jesus suffered on Calvary. Of course, all this happens in the eternal present time. By focussing our attention on the cenacle of the Last Supper, and in our mind seeking the company of Jesus and his followers, this somewhat difficult language construct becomes more acceptable.

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113) The post-war avengers, who worked covertly in military brigades - actually murder squadrons, felt without exception that they were invested with a historic, national mission; that they were representing a whole people. See for that matter the well known book by Michael Bar-Zohar from 1968: "The Avengers". This shows once again that revenge is our natural inclination, no one excepted.

45 – Host more real than our delusion

Thus we perceive a continuity from the beginning – for God has always known that He was going to send his Son – a continuity up to the present time, unbroken as long as the world exists, in a line that starts from the very foundation of the world, for it is written: *"The Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world."* (Rev. 13:8) Thus, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is not an innovation that came out of nowhere, but fits within the Old Testament tradition. The priest does not repeat anything, any more than the Israelite priests did with their minchah meal offerings, but 'participates' in and through Christ with the one perpetual Mass offering of the cenacle (sacrament hall). The latter is accepted theology within the Roman Catholic Church. This is so difficult to understand! And this now constitutes the main argument why Protestants reject the Sacrifice of the Mass. *"This language repels us. Who can listen to it?"* God requires no sacrifice, no repeat sacrifice, they say, and moreover, this line of thinking goes against common sense. Indeed it does. And yet He is 'the' sacrifice, 'the' sacrament, and his suffering builds the bridge through all times. For God, time has another dimension. For us, time is the means to experience eternity, albeit in successive steps. Isn't that a wonderful thought! For God, however, time is the means to insert the eternal and infinite into one instant, into that which is bounded. It is our pettiness to claim that what we do not understand cannot be true, instead of humbly bowing our heads and realizing that our knowing is only in part. So it could well be that the Host is more real than the delusion in which we find ourselves, a delusion to be sure that God created in his mind. It is not our delusion. That's an important distinction. And that particular delusion is how we see this inordinate reality. Science may claim to have found the essence of matter being in the atomic and sub-atomic particles, but if transsubstantiation is real - which we believe - then evidently what science sees to be the 'real thing' in the cellars of the tangible, is just a perception at a deeper level than what we normally perceive, but nevertheless it remains a perception, a subjective observation, even if we use a mechanical interface, through which we observe this perception.

In theological thinking we always try to interpret from our thought constructs and limited powers of observation. In the Middle Ages that was according to the Aristotelian concept. In our time according to modern physics, which is very incomplete as a theory of reality. Rationalizing from the limited reality available to us, it is therefore conceited to want to challenge God: 'You can't do that.' 'Ha!' Scolds God from his throne.[114)] Simply put: let's not make God small by the measure of our smallness. That, too, is Jewish tradition. To close an argument, a rabbi needs only to make a plausible case that it goes back to the instruction God had given to Moses when he sojourned on Mount Sinai, which was therefore not written down but became part of the oral tradition (written down much later). By referring to Moses, the argument places itself within Judaism outside the shackles of reason. Needless to say, Jesus is more than Moses. What applies to Moses applies a forteriori to Jesus. Protestants acknowledge that the Last Supper was instituted by Jesus, but choose to believe that this was done without any formal instruction beyond what the Bible says. And that contradicts Acts 1:3 where there is mention of a continuing oral instruction by Jesus Christ himself. The Christian Church is a continuation of the synagogue, also in that respect. Both have their God-given oral tradition, and as regards the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass it is not the least.

The Roman Catholic Church has always taught that the primary or Adamic transmission through the ages is included in the Apostolic Tradition, of which she is the guardian. It is therefore of eminent concern that the celebrant, after offering the Eucharistic

114) Proverbs 16:4-5 says that a fool deserves no answer. He would one day become wise in his own eyes! In this regard, Psalm 59:8-9 is appropriate: "They belch with their mouth. Swords are in their lips, for they say: 'Who hears?' But You, O Lord, shall laugh at them. You shall have the whole band in derision."

sacrifice and praying the ‘Unde et memores’, immediately afterwards prays the ‘Supra quæ propitio’ in which there is a reference to the three great Biblical sacrificers. The ‘Unde et memores’, in a retrospective of God’s plan of salvation, proceeds in full:

> «« Therefore, Lord, we your servants, and also your holy people, mindful of the so blessed passion of the same Christ, your Son, our Lord, and of his resurrection from the world beneath and his glorious ascension to Heaven, offer to your exalted majesty, from what you have bestowed and given, a pure victim, a holy victim, a stainless victim, the Holy Bread of eternal life and the Chalice of perpetual salvation. »» (old rite, similar to the new IA)

The ‘Supra quæ propitio’ that follows:

> «« Deign to look with propitious and serene countenance on them, and to accept them, **as you deigned to consider acceptable the gifts of your just servant Abel**, and the sacrifice of our Patriarch Abraham, and what your High Priest Melchizedek offered You, a holy sacrifice, a spotless victim. »»

The Church thus gives witness in her liturgy that Abel’s sacrifice is a prototype of the Eucharistic sacrifice, just accomplished on the altar. It is not possible to state this more clearly and formally.

46 – The later tradition

Protestants have their evening meal celebration too, and although there is no transsubstantiation of the Host into the actual Body and Blood of Christ, it is still a Christian service. It is a love meal or ‘agapè’ as it is sometimes referred to. Agapè fits the story of the Emmaus disciples: (Luk. 24:30-32)

> «« Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another: *“Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”* »»

The successors of the Apostles tried to find a theologically correct formulation for the great mystery of God’s incarnation in the Host, which was no easy task. Hence a great variety of formulation among the Church Fathers, but basically they all meant the same thing, and that is that after the Eucharistic prayer the Lord is essentially (in substantia) present in his total sacramental reality in the manifestations of bread and wine, which to this end have had to relinquish their own being (substantia). Substantia then is the higher reality that lies behind that which we tend to call reality. This substantia is not the ordinary body, but the glorified resurrection Body of Christ, with which He could walk through walls, yet also eat ordinary food. So it is of a different substance than we are used to here on earth! It was not until the twelfth century that the Latin term ‘transsubstantiatio’ began to appear in theological documents. It should be mentioned that as early as in the Vulgate (Latin translation of the Bible), which came about around the year 400, the daily bread in the “Lord’s Prayer” is translated as the *“panem nostrum **supersubstantialem**”* instead of ‘panem nostrum quoditianum’. Transsubstantiatio was officially put into use at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, the groundwork for which had been layed at the Sixth Council of Rome in 1079 in response to the conflict with Berengarius. The enemies of the Church pretend that new doctrines are invented at councils. Nothing could be further from the truth. A council confirms through an official college that which had long lived within the Church and gives its seal of approval to it on the basis of theological arguments. That is how it also worked in this case.

How did St. Jerome (Eusebius) arrive at that highly unusual Latin term for 'daily' in his translation of the Vulgate, which is strikingly similar to the 'transubstantiatio' of 700 years later? The Vulgate was not just any translation, but Jerome was urged to do so by Pope Damasus, who wanted a Latin version of the Bible in 'more accurate' Latin that matched the 'everyday language'. The only correct conclusion is that the original word is also highly unusual. The Greek 'epiousios' is used exclusively for the "The Lord's Prayer" (Mt. 6:11, Lk. 11:3) and occurs nowhere else in Greek literature. The definitive French edition (1998) of the authoritative Catechism of the Catholic Church (the CCC) states under No. 2837 that 'epiousios' can be understood in three ways: in the pedagogical sense, in the qualitative sense, and finally in the literal sense, which is then translated as 'super-essential', which (according to the CCC) *"points directly to the Bread of Life, the Body of Christ, the medicine to immortality, without which we lack life in ourselves."* There is also, of course, the manna of the Living Word, the Sacred Scripture. But for ús, who take refuge in the Bread of Life, it is certainly true that without that gift we lack life in ourselves. And just as the manna descended daily from heaven in wafers, which was essentially supernatural, so it is with the Bread of Life, our daily bread. The CCC quotes Augustine, an exact contemporary of Jerome, who says: *"The Eucharist is our daily bread. As for the manna, with which the people of Israel were fed during their trek through the desert, it is written: 'It (...) tasted like wafers (or hosts) with honey. (...) Take an urn of manna and put it before the Lord (in the Tabernacle or Tent of Meeting), to preserve it for our posterity.'"* (Ex. 31:31-33) Interesting.

The technique of transsubstantiation, if I may call it that, is closely related to Jesus' incarnation as a human being and the latter, in turn, is related to Jesus' incarnation in the universe.[115)] An inference from this is that if a priest does not believe in the true, real and substantial presence of God under the discernible forms of bread and wine, he will therefore also begin to doubt Christ's divine presence in the form of his human body, for if the greater cannot lead to the lesser, neither can the lesser lead to the greater. Despite the foregoing, God is separate from his creation. Jesus as the firstborn is one with creation, but that does not mean that creation and God are identical. After all, God is more than creation. It appears that the general can lead to the specific without detracting from God's fullness and indivisibility. The prayer during the Sanctus, following Isaiah 6:3 and the Psalms 19:1 and 72:19, is as follows: *"Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory."* The letter to the Colossians says it beautifully:

> «« [God's beloved] Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, powers or rulers or authorities. All things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him

115) God's acts of creation and God's incarnation relate to God, manifesting Himself 'outside' Himself without affecting his fulness 'inside' Himself. This divine self-limitation is designated in Chasidism as 'tzimtzum' or self-confinement and also as 'becoming concrete'. That possibility causes beings to become self-existent and autonomous. The non-Chasidic Jew sees it differently and thinks to know that it is impossible for the infinite God to enter into self-confinement, an approach that creates an unbridgeable expanse with Catholicism. However, if God could not enter into confinement, it is difficult to see how He could create something separate from Himself, for in the beginning when the beginning was not yet there, there was nothing outside of God. In the process of creation He creates something separate from Himself and in a lower realm (except for the Holy Trinity and the Son), yet remains always aware of everything, that is to say, remains part of it in one way or another. Even the tiniest movements of his creatures is known to Him, and if that movement or thought is not according to his Holy Will, it causes God to suffer and reach out in mercy in order to correct, if the creature allows Him to, because only perfection can satisfy the true almighty God, because He is perfection Himself.

> all things hold together. He is also the head of the body, the Church. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, that He might be first in all things, He alone. For God was pleased to have 'all the fullness' (consequently: infinity) dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, by Him, I say, whether beings on earth or in heaven, by making peace through his Blood that was shed on the Cross. »» (Col. 1:15-20)

This points to Jesus' presence always and everywhere. Therefore, the phenomenon of transsubstantiation is not entirely new or unique, but as a specific and excessive expression of God's Love, it can never be adequately praised. While man normally stands in the infinity of God, through Holy Communion the infinity of God comes into us! (until the Host is consumed) What an unfathomably magnificent event!

There is also a form of incarnation in the body of the Church, that is, in all believers together, according to Paul's word: *"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread."* (1 Cor. 10:16-17)

The creation of some random person from nought, that is, according to the image that God has in mind of that particular person and in which image he is being called, can be compared to aforementioned creation process, since hére too this human being was created in God's image. Despite all the frantic attempts to ruin that image, we are and remain, in Christ Jesus, God's creation. (Eph. 2:10) So let's see what insights the creation and generation process, as revealed in the Old Testament, provides.

47 – What did the early Christians say and do?

The belief of Christ's Real Presence in the consecrated bread and wine went relatively undisturbed during the first millennium. Let's see what some early Christians thought, keeping in mind that we can learn much from them about how the New Testament should be understood. After all, they are closest to the source of our faith.

It is recorded that Pope Saint Sixtus (115-125) issued a letter, stating: *"That it is prohibited for the faithful to even touch the sacred vessels, or receive (the Host) in the hand",*[116)] which testifies that the faithful believed in the Real Presence from the beginning onset. And what is true of the holy vessels is a fortiori true of the Holy Host. Saint Basil the Great (330-379), one of the four great Eastern Fathers, considered Communion in the hand so irregular that he did not hesitate to consider it a grave fault. (Letter 93) And so at the Council held at Saragozza (380), it was decided to punish with excommunication anyone who dared to continue the practice of Communion in the hand. The Council of Constantinople (692) followed the decree of the Council of Saragozza and prohibited the faithful from administering communion to each other in groups. It decreed, furthermore, that an excommunication of one week's duration would follow for those who would do so in the presence of a bishop, priest or deacon. In 1551, at the 13th session (Ch. 8), the Council of Trent in 1551 reaffirmed that the faithful receive the Sacrament from the hand of the priest, which, according to the same Council, was sanctioned by the illustrious example of our Lord Himself, who, with his own hands, consecrated and gave to his disciples, his most sacred Body.[117)]

Ignatius of Antioch was a disciple of the Apostle John and wrote a letter to the Smyrnaeans around the year 100. In it he referred to them who held heterodox opinions, that

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116) In almost identical terms, this was confirmed at the Council of Trent, session 13 ch. 8. I have not been able to find the original reference to the statement of Sixtus I.

"they keep away from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the Flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Flesh which suffered for our sins and which the Father, in his goodness, raised up again." This text is, outside Scripture, one of the oldest testimonies about the Eucharist, perhaps the oldest. The Gospel leaves little room for doubt. Does not the Apostle Paul say unequivocally: *"Does not the cup of blessing that we bless give communion with the Blood of Christ? Does not the bread we break give fellowship with the Body of Christ? Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, sins against the Body and Blood of the Lord. He who eats and drinks without recognizing the Body, eats and drinks his own judgment."* (1 Cor. 10:16, 11:27, 29)

Faithful, who after the Second Vatican Council receive the Sacred Host from the hands of a priest in their hands and do so because they are fully convinced that it is permitted by the Church and because it has become a general practice, those people are not in sin, provided they are fully convinced. However, if they have even the slightest doubt about whether it is right, but are not willing to listen to their conscience, then they are passing judgment on themselves. A layman can become a Eucharistic minister after his hand has been consecrated in a special ceremony, but this is borne out of necessity, because it is much preferable that a priest goes to the sick in order to distribute the Species.

Some forty years after Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr wrote: (Apology I 66:1-20)

> «« Not as common bread or common drink do we receive these things; but since Jesus Christ our Saviour was made incarnate by the Word of God and was both Flesh and Blood for our salvation, so too, as we have been taught that the food has been made into the Eucharist by the Eucharistic prayer, set down by Him, a transformation by which our own blood and flesh is nourished (…) [because it] is both the Flesh and the Blood of that incarnated Jesus. »»

We should not forget to mention Tarcisius, a lad of about twelve years old, who is known as the 'boy-martyr of the Eucharist'. He did not write about the Eucharist, but acted on his unshakeable belief in the real transsubstantiated presence of our Lord. He is the first notable martyr for defending the Eucharistic Body. One day in the year 225 he was carrying the Eucharistic Body in the appearance of bread on his way to prisoners in the great town of Rome. While on the Appian Road he met strangers who asked him what he was carrying, suspecting he was a Christian. He deemed it a shameful thing to cast pearls before the swine and kept quiet. And so he was assaulted with clubs and stones until he gave up the ghost. His friends took up his body and buried it with honour in the Callistus Cemetery. In his poem, Pope Damasus compares this Tarcisius with Stephan the Martyr of the book of Acts, who was taken away and stoned by the Jews after he had given them a wonderful sermon in the synagogue, arguing that the Temple service was now being replaced by the new cult, represented by the Eucharist, although the last he did not mention in precise terms. The Pope praised Tarcisius for suffering a cruel death rather than surrender *"the divine Body to raging dogs"*. Saint Tarcisius is seen as a model for altar boys and as an example of loving and heroic devotion to our Lord, who is really, that is substantial, present in the Holy Eucharist.

We also have the Church historian Eusebius, who lived from 263 to 339. He meticulously recorded what he observed without elaborating on it. He is therefore considered rather boring, but that precisely increases his reliability. This Eusebius writes:

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117) I would like to add that allowing to receive Communion in the hand, as has now become common practice, is also wrong because it makes it easy for Satanists to appropriate the Holy Host for their black masses and the like.

«« We children of the New Covenant celebrate our Passover every Sunday. We are constantly fed with the Body of the Saviour and each time with the Blood of the Lamb. Every Sunday we are strengthened with the sanctified Body of that same redeeming Paschal Lamb and our souls washed in his precious Blood. »»

Origen said in a homily on Exodus 13:3, somewhere in the middle of the third century, attesting his belief in the real presence of Christ:

«« You are accustomed to take part in the divine mysteries. So you know how, when you receive the Body of the Lord, to reverently exercise every care lest a particle of it fall and lest anything of the consecrated gift perishes. You account yourselves guilty, and rightly so, if any of it be lost through negligence. »»

Cyril of Jerusalem said in a discourse in the middle of the 4th century, in his Catechetic Discourses 4:22:9 :

«« Do not, therefore, regard the bread and wine as simply that, for they are, according to the Master's declaration, the Body and Blood of Christ. Even though the senses suggest otherwise, let faith make you firm. Do not judge by taste, but be fully assured by faith, not doubting that you have been deemed worthy [to partake in] the Body and Blood of Christ. »»

Statue of St. Tarcisius in the Musée Quai d'Orsay, Paris
The first Martyr for the Eucharist!

It is striking what Ephraim the Syrian, who died at Edessa in 373, manages to tell us in his Hymn of Praise to Faith:

«« Do not believe that this bread and wine that you have before you will remain what they were. Nay, my brother, believe nothing of it. Through the prayers of the priest and through the intervention of the Holy Spirit, the bread becomes Body and the wine becomes Blood. Since God has willed that the most venerable Word be born as a human, could He not have wrought that the bread become his own Body, and the wine the Blood of Christ? »»

This comment by Ephraim the Syrian is fascinating. Tell me, what is harder to understand, that God has been incarnated in a human body or in a Host? Personally, I have equal difficulty from my logically thinking mind to believe in one or the other. So I prefer to believe both, and this is also based on what Jesus himself said and did and as has been recorded by reliable witnesses from earliest times. Finally I quote from a fifth century homily of Theodore of Mopsuestia, which shows that the controversy is not new:

«« When Christ gave the bread He did not say: 'This is the symbol of my Body', but: *"This is my Body"*. In the same way, when He gave the cup of his Blood, He did not say: 'This is the symbol of my Blood', but: *"This is my Blood"*, for He did not want us to look upon the [Eucharistic gifts], after having received them by grace by the coming of the Holy Spirit, according to their nature, but wanted us to receive them as they are, that is to say as the Body and Blood of our Lord. »» (Catech. Hom. 5:1)

It is only at the end of the first millennium that doubts were expressed as concerns the real presence of Christ in the consecrated figures, written down by a certain monk Ratramnus († ca 870). In the erupting controversy Ratramnus' teaching was condemned at the Synod of Vercelli in 1150. At the same time the Greek Church defended the long held belief in the dispute against Sotericus. That happened at the Synod of Constantinople in 1156 and 1157. The official doctrine was formulated at the Councils of Lateran IV (1215) and Trent (1551), adhering to a long held tradition.

We could be accused of incompleteness if we did not mention the crisis surrounding belief in the 'real presence', which was set in motion in the person of Berengarius of Tours (ca. 999-1088), a leading figure of his day whose excessive intellectualism led to many doubts about the doctrine of the Eucharist. Great upheaval ensued over this, with Berengarius at times yielding to pressure to revoke his opinions and at others not. Berengarius denied the possibility of a substantial change in the elements of bread and wine and refused to admit that Christ's Body is concretely present on the altar. His argument was that Christ cannot be brought from Heaven to Earth before the Last Judgement. He maintained that the Body of Christ, which exists only in Heaven, is operative for humanity through its sacramental counterpart or symbol and therefore Christ is not in reality in the Eucharist except, as he said, as an ideal. Pope Gregory VII ordered Berengarius to subscribe to a statement of faith, which became the cornerstone of Eucharistic piety. It was the Church's first definitive statement of what had always been believed, but not always so clearly understood. It is a declaration of faith in the Eucharist as an unquestionable objective and undivided reality, which Berengarius signed in 1079: [118)]

«« I, Berengarius, believe in my heart and openly profess that the bread and wine that are placed on the altar are through the mystery of the sacred prayer and the words of our Redeemer, substantially changed into the true and proper life-giving Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord;[119)] and that after the Consecration it is the true Body of Christ, who was born of the Virgin, as an offering for the salvation of the world hung on the Cross, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and is the true Blood of Christ which flowed from his side; not only through the sign and power of the sacrament but in his proper nature and true substance; as it is set down in this summary and as I read it and you understand it. Thus it is that I believe, and I will not teach any more against this faith. So help me God for this holy gospel of God! »»

48 – God's overwhelming Love remains unrequited

I used to have some resentment because Jesus had ascended to Heaven. I thought, nice God is that, who leaves me with misery! Until I realized that He did not leave us as orphans. In frenzied and extreme folly of Love, the God who made the Heaven and the Earth, created Himself through the perishable matter of a little bread and wine, in order to be Life for each of us in this extraordinary way. For enemies are many, vicious wiles and traps besiege his followers everywhere, the passions, the weaknesses… Surprisingly Joseph and Mary are drawn into great poverty on their flight to Egypt, even though they got gold, frankincense and myrrh from the three kings. Were they robbed? The mystical literature is unanimous: Joseph and Mary handed those treasures right back out, because earthly wealth did not count. After all, they were richly endowed, richer than King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain, the richest man at the time of this writing. They owned the king of kings and creator of the universe. And so they had no problem handing out all those gifts. What riches to receive Jesus-Host, to become a living Host, a dwelling for God, who wanders into our souls laden with gold, frankincense and myrrh! Gold as the image of imperishable life, frankincense of a pleasing and sacrificial walk of life, and myrrh to cure our souls. With the same generosity that was peculiar to Joseph and Mary, we seek to distribute these gifts to those around us.

We should realise that our present time, following in chronological order the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, is no end in itself. The Host, fruit of the sacrifice on the Cross, is meant to prepare a body for God, a people 'in' God. Marie-Julie Jahenny confides the following to one of the brothers Chardonnier on April 26, 1880: [120)]

> «« By marrying his Cross, Jesus made a completely resplendent covenant. He made it by his own suffering and after that he transfigurated it – which is an all-embracing transformation – with the delights he receives from his Father in his eternal reign. These delights are a thousandfold richer and more abundant than the sufferings from which they ensue, and are to be fully revealed in a glorious era yet to come. »»

Unfortunately, throughout history, God's overwhelming Love has been met with overwhelming ingratitude and scandalous sins. Instead of offering good thoughts when the Host is distributed, one is absent-minded and thinks of something else entirely. When one prays, it is done superficially and with insufficient confidence. Worse, some approach the altar while burdened with grave sins and have not seen fit to go to confession of them. Moreover, how many Masses have not been celebrated unworthily over time? There are also those who receive the Host for the sole purpose of offending God in ways I prefer not to comment on. Despite the tsunami of indifference and hatred, God's Love is unstoppable, and nothing holds it back. This is quite simply the hallmark of Love. It is this aspect that stuns me, that puts all God's miracles in the shade.

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118) Once back in France after his confession of 1079, Berengarius of Tours published his own account of the discussions in Rome with which this confession was essentially revoked. This led to another trial in 1080 conducted by a synod at Bordeaux, with an other undersigned confession. After this he kept silent and retired to the island of Saint Cosmo near Tours, where he spent his days in ascetic solitude. There he died eight years later, in union with the Church, as the narrative tells.

119) It says 'flesh and blood', not 'the whole body', as if it were a miniature Christ. And indeed Eucharistic miracles seem to indicate that the Host is the flesh (and blood) of Christ's heart.

120) "Le Ciel en Colloque avec Marie-Julie Jahenny" (The Heaven in consultation with Marie-Julie Jahenny) by Pierre Roberdel – Ed. Résiac, Montsûrs # 1982; cf. the revelations to a certain Lucie in "Le Grand Message de la Croix, 1981-1984" (The great message of the Cross) - Téqui, Paris # 1991.

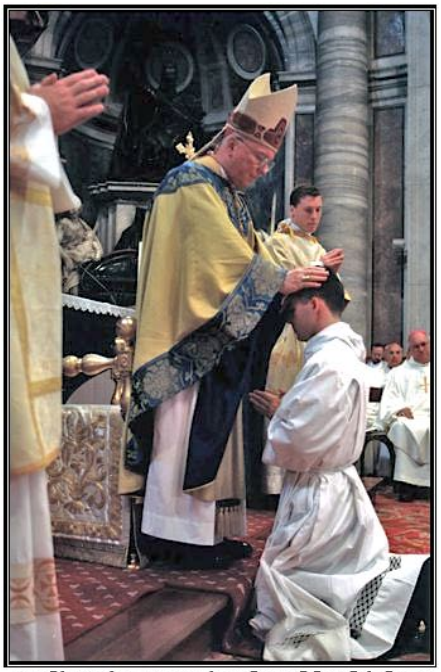
Part 6 – Ch. 2

PRIESTHOOD NOT MADE UP OF CIVIL SERVANTS

SOW THE WIND AND REAP THE WHIRLWIND

49 – Called by God to be a priest, or is he a civil servant?

As noted elsewhere in this journal, the heads of the Dominican province in the Netherlands, with its headquarters in Nijmegen, published the brochure "The Church and the Ministry" in the autumn of 2007 and distributed it to approximately 1,400 Dutch parishes. At the same time and English-language version was sent out via the usual news media. At present (Febr. 2008) it is also available in French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. We could say that this represents a well-prepared media offensive! A withdrawal or something of a measure of tolerance towards a more correct Roman Catholic viewpoint it would not seem a justifiable expectation. The intention behind the piece is clear: the priest has to become a civil servant, an official. The writers of this 38-page brochure are the Dominicans André Lascaris, Jan Nieuwenhuis, Harrie Salemans and Ad Willems. Lascaris was the best known. For almost twenty years he was involved in the Irish Peace Movement and has published a great deal on that subject. Thereafter he was associated with Dominican Study Centre for Theology and Society in Nijmegen.



Ordination to priesthood by bishop

The problem dealt with by the writers is very serious and everyone shares in their burning care regarding the crisis in the Church. The solution they propose is that of the

demolition hammer: the old must make way for the new. Because of the alarming lack of priests, whereby many parishes can scarcely function in the present system, a solution is sought in what is called the *"centre for faith and spirituality"*. The bishop would be obliged to ordain into the 'office' candidates for the priesthood emerging from a centre such as this. The brochure speaks deliberately of an upside-down pyramidal structure and - how otherwise? - refers to the decisions and discussions of Vatican II (1962-1965), a Council that by its interpretation contradicts all previous Councils in our church history of the last two thousand years! The proposal shows a terrible lack of historical insight, of which more later. The decisions of the Council must be seen in their entirety and one does need to read what it says. The brochure decrees that if the bishop refuses to lay his hands on the proposed candidate, then (and it really does state this): ***"the parishes may be confident that they are able to celebrate a real and genuine Eucharist when they are together in prayer and share bread and wine."***

Holy Week Hongkong, 9 April 2007: H. Mass with nearly 200 priests and 2 bishops

By way of conclusion, the Dominican brothers say the following:

> «« The present shortage of priests is frankly unnecessary and therefore unreal. In any present-day parishes men and women are active in a heart-warming and stimulating way as persons who initiate and inspire communities in a way adapted to our time, as Christians people can identify with. (…) Is it true to say that in our Western society unmarried people are per se more suitable to be leaders of a faith community than married ones? And that in our Western cultural pattern men are per se more suitable to lead and inspire a Christian community than women are? Our answer, and that of very many fellow faithful, to both questions is an unequivocal 'no' (…) The official church authority in principle opts for a protection of the priesthood in its present form over against the right of church communities to the Eucharist; in the official view using the approved eucharistic prayers and especially pronouncing the words of institution not only is more important than the faith community, but is also seen and used as an exclusive power which is restricted to ordained priests. »»

50 – Heritage from the roaring sixties

It comes as no surprise that it just happens to be the Netherlands where this document has seen the light of day. The matter landed on a slippery slope under Cardinal Alfrink. He was archbishop during an important juncture in time, from 1955 to 1975. He held Modernist opinions according to which the supernatural was giving way more and more to the emancipation of mankind, the starting point, measure and aim of the economy of salvation. Here the vertical gives way to the horizontal, and that is what they dare call economy of salvation! Alfrink strove to build into the ecclesiastical structure the Dutch polder model, based on wide-ranging discussions and room for compromise, as used on the political field of play. The changes he sought to introduce had to do with binding interventions by the faithful in ecclesiastical matters, far-reaching liturgical innovations, a great deal of free thinking in ethical questions such as contraception, abortion and euthanasia, and, of course, the question of celibacy. And though there were more rebellious church provinces in Europe in those turbulent years, the Netherlands stood out because of the unity shown by its bishops and the support of the large community of faith, taken for granted. In addition, the continual hammering of the Press put the whole thing out of joint.

De verandering van brood en wijn in het vlees en bloed van Jezus

The year 1970 marked the turning point, yet not a final one. From then on the Vatican took the reins in hand again is such matters as episcopal appointments. This is described in great detail in the booklet by iconoclast Walter Goddijn: “Kardinale kwesties in Katholiek Nederland 1970-1987” (Cardinal Issues in Catholic Netherlands). The author experienced everything at close quarters in his capacity as adviser to the bishops. He makes no secret of his distaste for the papal actions. The cover of his book carries the following passage: *“Much of the present misery within the Catholic Church, including the serious shortage of priests, could have been avoided, according to the author, if the central authority of Rome had adopted in 1970 the standpoints of the Dutch bishops, under the leadership of Cardinal Alfrink, regarding the obligatory celibacy of priests.”* No doubt this small volume was put on the obligatory reading list at Nijmegen’s recalcitrant theological faculty! Rome tried to turn the tide, but it was too little and too late, as shown by the Church & Ministry initiative. Monsignor Giuseppe Beltrami, Internuncio from 1959 to ‘67, warned my father, then Dutch Foreign Minister, that major problems were awaiting the Dutch church. He had come to this conclusion after analysing the teaching at seminaries in the Netherlands and what the influential Dominican Edward Schillebeeckx (1914-2009) and his like were teaching at the theological faculty in Nijmegen.[122)]

Edward Schillebeeckx

My father was a good friend of Beltrami's, for he and his family went to Mass at the Nuntiature every Sunday. That made for good contacts within the Vatican. In 1980, when my father was Secretary General of NATO, he intervened in the imminent separation of the Spanish Prince Carlos Hugo of Bourbon-Parma from Irene Lippe-Biesterfeld (sister of Queen Beatrix). Cardinal Alfrink was planning to annul the marriage, which would mean a de facto dissolution. When my father got wind of this, he immediately contacted the Pro-Nuntius Bruno Wüstenberg and advised him to have Rome intervene to tell Alfrink that a statement about the validity of the marriage laid outside his jurisdiction, because it had taken place in Rome, in the Santa Maria Maggiore (a beautiful basilica!), and that it thus fell under the jurisdiction of Rome. Which is the reason why Alfrink failed to get his way.[123)]

Noticeable in this Schillebeeckx caricature from 1980 by the artist David Levine, is that the Belgian Father Schillebeeckx is wearing an ordinary man's suit, giving expression to the wish on the part of many priests to be a simple human being among human beings. A priest may be someone with simple human traits, but that no more makes him an ordinary human among humans than is Queen Beatrix because of her royal function. Testimony of Gloria Polo from Columbia, carrying her testimony with the permission of the Bishop of Bogota: *"Who did you think you were, making yourself God and judging My anointed ones? They are 'human', and the holiness of a priest is built by his community, that prays, loves, and supports him. When a priest sins, his community is questioned, not him."* (gloriapolo.net)

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121) Enfant Teriible Edward Schillebeeckx O.P. has not always been progressive. Brilliant as he was, by the time he was 29 he was lecturing on Thomism at the University of Louvain, surely not a subject that would appeal to Modernists. In 1958 he was appointed professor at the University of Nijmegen. Although there were already clear signs of a turn-around, the break with traditional Christian faith was not definitive until Schillebeeckx's critical review of John A.T. Robinson's book (1963): "Honest to God". His review unleashed a storm of criticism, apparently too much for his sensitive nature, and he wrote a new review under the title "Honest to Robinson". In "Honest to God" Robinson proposes abandoning the notion of a God 'out there', existing somewhere out in the Universe as a 'Cosmic supremo'. Didn't we abandon the idea of God 'up there', that fits the notion of the old man up in the sky? In its place, he offered a frankly and openly atheistic reinterpretation of God, whom he defined as Love, spelled with a capital 'L'. (pp. 63, 75, 105, 115-116, 127, 130) My aunt Agnes Luns, my grandfather's sister, was a sort of Golda Meir-like figure, but then representing traditional Catholic faith. As city councillor in Amsterdam she was well able to stand her ground. Her opponent was Mrs. Weissmuller (from the socialist PvdA), who was also a strong woman. At one point Agnes asked a question of Schillebeeckx, after he had just given a lecture. "But Madam", he answered, "you can't say that!!" "Ohh!" my aunt replied with her sonorous Luns-voice and to the great hilarity of the audience: "So that's what you think? Well, then, I'll say it again!"

122) According to the Roman Catholic Church an eccliastical marriage can only be dissolved by the death of one of the spouses; but a marriage can be declared invalid or annulled if at the time of the marriage the conditions of marriage were not fulfilled, for instance, if one of the partners was still married to someone ecclesiastically or if a notarial deed was signed beforehand stating that the marriage vow was made under duress, as in 1955 by Princess Irene von Fürstenberg, then 15 years old. A separation of table and bed can be granted, but the partners cannot remarry with each other and only to another after the former partner has died.

Footnote from the editor of the journal "The Burning Lamp" in which this article appeared at the time:

> «« In our circles too, action in the direction of Rome was taken at the time. Our first chairman, ex-parliamentarian Klaas Beuker, had received inside information on the plan to declare Princess Irene's marriage invalid. Together – Klaas Beuker and myself (Jan Leechburch Auwers, Beuker's closest colleague) – we visited various Curial bodies in Rome to find out more about the matter. On our side the particular emphasis was placed on the fact that when it comes to persons of royal blood, any rulings regarding an invalidation belong to papal pregoratives and not those of the local bishop. »»

Down in adoration falling,
Lo! the sacred Host we hail;
Lo! o'er ancient forms departing,
Newer rites of grace prevail;
Faith for all defects supplying,
Where the feeble senses fail.

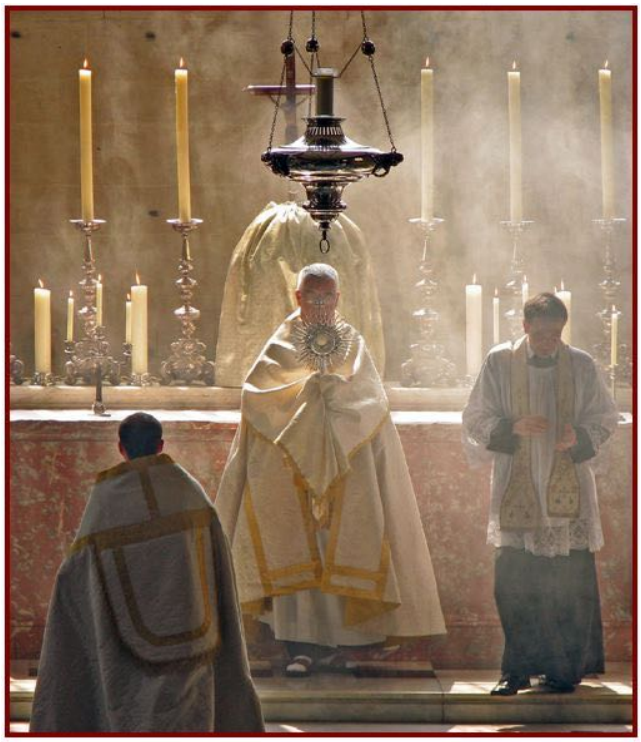
An important eclipse happened when a radical group within the Dutch Church Province, called Platform, organised a meeting on the 8th of May 1980. Ever since it called itself the '8th of May movement'.[123)] This group was devoted to the political, social and theological commitment of how could it be otherwise: Father Schillebeeckx. So, on the 8th of May forty people convened to mount a fight against the decisions of the Special Synod of Dutch Bishops, that were ratified on January 31st in Rome's Sistine Chapel. The central theme then concerned the position of laymen, priests and deacons within the Church. The 8th of May movement was backed by a large following and wanted the democratization of the Church; the base would henceforth be acting as the sole decision power effectively putting aside both bishops and the Pope. One of the burning questions was intercommunion. Decision 46 of the Special Synod states: *"Intercommunion between separated brothers is not the answer to Christ's appeal for perfect unity."* It is meaningful that the Dominican Father Oostvogel ostentatiously protested this directive on occasion of the marriage ceremony of Prince Maurits with a Catholic girl on May 30, 1998, that was seen life on national TV by a very large audience. In the eighties Oostvogel acted as vice-president of the 8th of May movement. At this marriage the Eucharist was in a Dutch Reformed church (sic!) and when he invited everyone to communion a few Protestant members of the Royal House responded, like former Queen, Princess Juliana. This caused a stir under church leaders of Protestant denomination as well as the little group of faithful in the country. The daily ever repeating practice of Eucharist is so vital to the experience of faith of a priest, that a priest who is deliberately denying the real presence of the Lord in the host – which is something different than doubting – also denies the divinity of Christ.[124)]

51 – The Desacralization of the City of God

There is talk of a schismatic movement that has been set in motion. A schism implies a split in the Church, and what is going on here is much worse. In earlier times, the heretics themselves withdrew from the Church in order to establish a church of their

123) On Nov. 21, 2003, the 8th-May Movement was deemed irrelevant and officially discontinued. What transpired: its constituency had dwindled due to ongoing secularization and ageing.

own, knowing full well that Holy Mother Church would immediately reject them. But at present they want nothing more than to remain within. The Roman Catholic Church is the oldest institution on earth. That lends status, power. Even more: the rebellious priests want to be ordinary people who are members of an ordinary human association, but not outside Rome. Priests are, indeed, ordinary mortals, but they do have a special function and are equiped thanks to their special ordination, that indelible sign that makes them recognisable even in Hell. The rebels wish to remove utterly the dividing wall between profane and sacral. In earlier times, the pagans humbly worshipped idols and because of that stood on a higher plane than what is now going on. The 'God is dead' mentality has desacralised the Eucharist, and thus the poison has entered the heart even of the Mystical Body. This is achieved by turning the All Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus into an ordinary fraternal meal in memory of the one brother, the 'man' Jesus Christ, who has left us an example. Thus it has become, literally, a simple meal of bread, clothed in good intentions. What a miserable sort of belief! The devotion to the Blessed Sacrament has thus completely disappeared, which can only lead to a further erosion of the Church …and that under the guise of freedom, brotherly love and tolerance. The divine revelation is reduced to a human level, deprived of its mysticism and supernatural nature. Since the 1950s the parishes have trodden the path of mediocrity, arriving at indifference regarding both the celebration of and the attendance at Holy Mass. Finally, we have reached a point of total disdain for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. That is the stage we are at now.



On Sunday 10 June 2007, the Feast of Corpus Christi, Catholics of Oxford took part in a Eucharistic Procession from the Oxford Oratory to the Catholic Chaplaincy, pausing at Blackfriars Priory for a sermon given by Bishop William Kenney CP, auxiliary of Birmingham.

Photo O.P. Lawrence

124) An article published in English on this type of development is by Michael Gilchrist in 1988: "The Post-war Crisis in the Dutch Church until the Eighties – The Dutch Experiment: growth of a New Church".

There remains the hatred whereby others are prevented from adoring the Sacrament, even if only on the feast of Corpus Christi, especially known as Blessed Sacrament Day. The Latin name is: "Dies Sanctissimi Corporis et Sanguinis Domini Iesu Christi" (Day of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ the Lord). It is celebrated on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday to commemorate the institution of the Holy Eucharist on Holy Thursday. And as we know, Trinity Sunday falls on the first Sunday after Whitsun. Blessed Sacrament Day was instituted in 1246, on the intercession of a Belgian nun, by the Bishop of Liège, and 65 years later was confirmed by a general council. The feast is accompanied by a solemn procession. Martin Luther said in his sermon No. 1521, referring to the solemn procession going through the streets: *"I am to no festival more hostile than this one.*" which, because it comes from his mouth, is a strong recommendation to do just that. Thomas Aquinas wrote a beautiful liturgy for the feast. The feast of Corpus Christi was needed at the time because the adoration owed to Jesus had fallen into severe neglect. To strengthen the faith, they seized this means of public adoration of the Body of God in the form of the Holy Host. Let the faithful Christians take this feast seriously in order to bring about a restoration in place of the failure to recognise the immense font of mercy that is the Blessed Sacrament, and also of the related insults and malpractices offered to the Giver, He who above all gives Himself. In the message of the Book of Truth of Jan. 18th 2012, Mary, the Mother of Salvation, says: *"You insult my son when you receive the Holy Eucharist in the hand."*

52 – A piece of déjà-vu

The amazing thing about the Church & Ministry initiative is that it is a resurrection of "La constitution civile du clergé" (The civil Constitution of the Clergy), though now proceeding from the bosom of the Church itself. This piece of legislation was passed by the French parliament on 12th July 1790 (less than a year following the storming of the Bastille). This was to be the anvil on which papist belief was to be broken: *écraser l'infâme*! (crush the infamy). It was supposed to be an administrative ruling, as is also suggested to us by the authors of Church & Ministry. The following sentence from the Civil Constitution is especially worthy of mention: *"Parish priests should be elected by the electoral assemblies of the districts."* That was the heart of the matter. It would be extremely naive not to assume that Freemasonry, that currently plays a stronger part than during the French revolution, behind which it was the driving force, is directly or indirectly involved in the Church & Ministry initiative. This is grist to their mill. And it is therefore not too strong to say that this initiative bears within itself the seeds of the destruction of Christ's Church on earth.

After the introduction of the civil Constitution of the clergy, almost all the bishops stuck to their guns. Their public declaration ended by saying that people should not be of the opinion that the same is true of Church discipline as applies to state structures, and that God's edifice is such that it can be changed by man.[125)] How up to date that sounds! Almost half the clergy gave way and swore allegiance to the new regulations. Anyone who refused was declared schismatic (réfractair) and was to be deported with but one sure outcome: death! Pope Pius VI said the following in his sermon on the occasion of the death of the pious King Louis XVI, who died on the scaffold:

> «« Who would ever doubt that this monarch was sacrificed first of all because of religious hatred, because of a ferocious spirit against the Catholic doctrines? For a long time the Calvinists had been conspiring in France for the ruin of the

125) «Enfin q'on ne crût pas qu'il en était de la discipline de l'Église, comme de la police des états, et que l'édifice de Dieu était de nature à être changé par les hommes.» This is taken from the famous "Exposition des principes sur la Constitution civile du clergé", a statement signed by 149 bishops and which enjoyed enormous support in France and abroad.

> Catholic faith.[126)] (and also:) The main reproach levelled against this Prince, pertained to his unflinching firmness in his refusal to approve and sanction the decree for the deportation of priests and his letter written to the Bishop of Clermont to whom he announced his decision to re-establish in France the Catholic religious practice as soon as circumstances would permit. Is not this sufficient proof to conclude and defend that Louis was a martyr indeed? »»

The people of La Vendée (Anjou, Brittany, Poitou), faithful to their belief and to their monarch, refused to accept that priests chosen by Rome had to go underground. The military conscription of March 1793 was the starting shot for a regular war, including major field campaigns and the besieging of towns. On the side of the regulars (les Bleus) no prisoners were taken: everyone possible was hounded to death, including women and children. They were drowned, strangled, suffocated or simply left to die of hunger in prison, according to the most convenient manner and that which cost less. Wherever possible the harvest and food stocks were destroyed. The fat dripping from the burning bodies was collected and used in the lazarets…

After more than terrible fighting, Paris had to admit defeat. Even the 'hellish columns' had to call a halt, who had been expressly commissioned by parliament to kill pregnant women, *"those breeding grounds of highway robbers"*. On Nov. 10, 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte took over power, serving as scourge of renegade Europe.[127)] He is sensible and knows his priorities: a war attrition, as in the Vendée, serves no good purpose. On 28th December he declared freedom of religion for all, and it stuck; a first step on that road dated from as early as 1795. And yet Napoleon was no friend of the faith,[128)] since he was excommunicated in 1809 (which signalled his God-willed military defeats). The Concordat between Napoleon and the Pope, signed on 15th July 1801, was the direct result of the heroic struggle of the people of the Vendée. The Concordat confirmed the Catholic faith as primary, which meant the fiasco of the civil Constitution of the clergy. The toll was high. "La Grande Guerre" (the great war), with its two million Vendéens, ended in Febr. 1795, having cost 400,000 lives: 180,000 regulars (les Bleus) and 220,000 Vendéens (les Blancs).

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126) With this remark, Pius VI was referring to the horrible massacre of the Catholics of Nîmes, on June 13, 14 and 15 of the year 1790, committed by the Calvinists (Huguenots) backed up by the Assemblée Nationale. This act, perpetrated on the citizens of Nîmes, was their punishment for having pleaded with the King to block the acceptation of the civil Constitution of the clergy. The constitution was formally accepted by the Assembly the following month, specifically on July 12th.

The religious fights in the department of the Gard, where Nîmes is situated, have a long and painful history. The revocation in 1685 of the Edict of Nantes, under the reign of Louis XIV, provoked powerful reactions by the Protestants in the region (war of the Camisards), which called for repressive measures by the royal forces, known as the Dragonnades. The 18th century happened to be quiet and peaceful until the days that were the preamble to the Revolution when the old contentions regenerated. The subsequent reaction during the second Restoration period, by the Royalists, was bloody and counts in the general history among the darkest periods of the White Terror (July-August 1815).

127) The coup d'état of 18/19 Brumaire in the year VIII of the revolutionary calendar is widely regarded as the end of the French Revolution and the beginning of the Napoleonic dictatorship.

128) Pope Pius VI condemned the French Revolution and the suppression of the Catholic Church in France that resulted from it. French troops commanded by Napoleon Bonaparte defeated the Papal army and occupied the Papal States in 1796. In 1798, upon his refusal to renounce his temporal power, the Pope was taken prisoner and transported to France. He died eighteen months later in Valence on August 29 1799.

53 – Nothing can stop God's triumph

What we are now going through is worse than at the time of the Frenchg Revolution and later under Communism. God's Kingdom on earth and his flock are no longer threatened directly, but faith is being smothered within the Mystical Body of the Church until a flame burns only here and there. Divine Love has to make more and more space for worldly love. Cardinal Pacelli saw it coming. Before he became Pope Pius XII, he warned that *"a day would come when the civilized world will deny its God, when the Church will doubt as Peter doubted. She will be tempted to believe that Man has become God, that his Son is only a symbol and, in the churches, Christians will look in vain for the red Altar lamp where God awaits them."*

The Church is now suffering its own Golgotha. And yet no demonic or human action will be able to jeopardize God's triumph. *"Never is God more of a conqueror than when his cause appears lost, and never is the devil more radically conquered than when he seems to have won the game."* These are the words of professor Jean Vaquié, that great French post-conciliar fighter for the ecclesiastical tradition, who also said: *"In the same way as on Calvary, when the Son of God hung nailed to the wood of the Cross as willed by the princes, the priests and the chosen people, Satan's triumph seemed complete. And yet! His defeat was total, for the work of redemption of the human race was consummated by the sacrifice of Our Lord."*

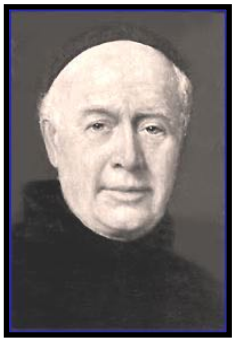
54 – A torrent of grace

If the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass has been turned into pure ritual, a fine stage play, who then will want to become a priest? Desacralisation reaching even further can never be the solution for lack of priestly vocations. The solution must be found in a re-valuation of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. A solution of this kind is offered to us by the venerable Conchita Cabrera de Armida (1861-1937), commonly called the Great Conchita of Mexico. This woman wrote a great deal about the Holy Eucharist, encouraged in this by a lively dialogue with Christ.

She was mother of nine children, living at a time of major persecution of the faithful. This period between 1910 and 1921 can be directly compared with the French Revolution. By order of the State, churches were closed and priest murdered. The "Ten Tragic Days" of Mexico run parallel to the French reign of terror (Le Règne du Terreur). In the first 15 months of the God-hating regime in Mexico 80,000 people were killed. The number was to increase to 900,000 – for a total population of 15 million! In 1926 the so-called Calles Law forbade under severe sanctions the celebration of the Mass. Critics were given a two-year prison sentence. Education in particular had to suffer. Anyone wishing to teach had to sign a statement that they were an irreconcilable enemy of the Catholic Church. Calles declared: *"We need to get hold of the consciences of the young people because they are part of and must be part of the revolution. We must absolutely banish the clerical and conservative enemy from all levels of society where it is hiding – I mean from education."* It is within this context that Conchita wrote about priests and the Holy Eucharist. She also provides the remedy for our current crisis, one that is far from being over.[129)] I quote from her extensive work: [130)]

> «« In the modern world the preoccupations and the problems that people have to face are so numerous and so anguishing that they often feel the need to find a solution as soon as possible. This is particularly the case with priests, who run the risk of drowning themselves in a multiplicity of activities. And when distracted by the innumerable duties of their ministry, they torture their minds to know how they will manage to reconcile their life of prayer with that involved in the tasks they have to fulfil. This unity in their life, this (purely external)

putting in order of their ministry, and even the simple practice of pious acts, is impossible to accomplish from a human vantage point, even if the latter favours it. In order to unify their life and their ministry, priests should imitate Christ, whose nourishment consisted of doing the will of the One who sent Him to perfect his work of salvation. »»



How should you search for and find the love of God? You will find it in the Blessed Sacrament: His Love is exposed there to adoration. He wishes to give Himself there. It is there that the angels in stupefaction see the spectacle of the excess of the love of Jesus. If at least Jesus were to come into a human heart as beautiful and pure as the angel; but Jesus comes, it pleases Him to come, into an imperfect heart, filled with venial sins and defects. At this sight, the most beautiful angels cannot sufficiently wonder at what Jesus does in His infinite love.

Father Paul, pray for us

From the book: "Père Paul de Moll (bénédictin belge) – un thaumaturge au XIXe siècle" by Édouard van Speybrouck (2007, Transiit Benefaciendo, p. 126).

Here we see a present-day problem in the exercise of the priestly office. The way in which the document "The Church and the Ministry" is drawn up fits in there and makes us think of a cry of despair. The pastor carries his parish. What a burden! But do the parishioners in their turn carry their pastor? Do they pray for him? To my shame, I must confess that in earlier times I scarcely prayed for the priests in my parishes (I have moved house several times). Jesus said to Conchita:

«« I wish that in all dioceses the faithful should offer up their Sunday communion for the priests, for they have a great need of the Holy Spirit. I promise that the beneficial effects will not be long in showing themselves in the Church. »»

And yet the priests are not devoid of blame, for Jesus says:

«« If the devil has gained ground in my vineyard, it is because of a lack of saintly workers labouring there. Instead there are only tepid, dissipated, worldly priests, assimilated into the spirit of the world and who have allowed themselves

129) Although the Vatican is putting up a good fight, the crisis is far from having blown over. Thus on 15th March 2008 a book by Jürgen Mettepenningen, working at the Faculty of Theology of Louvain University, was published: "De Kerk bloost - pleidooi voor een gedurfder beleid" (The Church blushes – a plea for a more daring policy). Mettepenningen makes a plea for the Church to show a major drive to give itself a clear profile. The language of the Eucharistic celebration should be freshened up: "This language is no longer today's normal speech. You cannot proclaim a message of life in a dead language." According to Mettepenningen it cannot be that no Masses be offered in certain places because there is no priest. And too many church services are organised for people, like for a marriage, who otherwise never see the inside of a church. Hence, according to the theologian, society itself must organise rituals for crucial events in life. And the priesthood of women is, in his opinion, a dated problem that the church authorities themselves have created and is a constant source of self-impoverishment. May I ask Mettepenningen a question: "If the sacrifice of the Mass is in persona Christi, a man, how can the priest be a woman?"

130) The quotes from the works of the Great Conchita are taken from "Conchita Cabrera de Armida – au cœur du Mystère Eucharistique", by Juan Gutiérrez Gonzáles, published by Pierre Téqui, Paris – 2004. (pp. 108-109, 301, 295-97)

to be dragged along by the prevailing atmosphere, without showing any resistance, nor fighting against it, while neglecting the essential part of their ministry, which is to transform themselves into Me. »»

Conchita goes on to explain how the priest becomes one with Christ in a careful and trusty celebration of the Mass. This is known as 'in persona Christi', since it is Christ who, through the priest, brings about the sacrifice of the Mass. In this way the priest receives all the graces he needs to fulfil his sacred duties. Just as the bread is transubstantiated, explains Conchita, so also God wishes to transubstantiate the priest which, in the latter case, is brought about not by a single word but which has to be expressed more and more in his whole life. Building on this theme, Jesus says:

«« You must understand that this desire to transubstantiate the priests into Me is not a more or less great and simple devotion but an essential point which has not been taken into account, and yet it is the most important for the victory of the Church. The time has come for a profound renewal of the hearts of priests, in order to respond to the desires of my heart, without which the Church will not develop spiritually towards sanctity as I would wish.

The priests are much too keen on following the traits of their human nature without raising their eyes upwards. They remain stuck to the earth and to the material things that tarnish and dishonour the things of God. That is why I wish the life of priests, their entire being, their heart, their soul and their life should become more spiritual. In short, I desire everything in them to be transformed into Me.

May I tell you the secret of my heart with regard to priests? Yes, I shall tell you: I wish to make rich men of my priests, filling them not with vain and transitory riches but with Myself, with everything I am, with everything I have, so that even on this earth they should be united to the Blessed Trinity.

Ah! If only you knew how much I desire to unite priests to Myself! My soul cannot stand to see them so far off and so lost. And their indifference, their disloyalty, their coldness towards my Church, their indifference to spiritual matters and to souls, this is what causes me the greatest pain. This is what I wish to see disappear, less for my pleasure than for their own sanctity. This is what will restore joy to the face of the Father!

Oh! My daughter! Demand this spiritual renewal of the priests, something that will happen only if they do truly welcome the Holy Spirit and transform themselves into Me…

If the priests represent Me in a dignified way on earth, if they transform themselves into Me, a torrent of grace will descend on humanity. It will be like opening a door to let God in so that he can flood and start distributing new gifts, new charismas, unsuspected lights and treasures, which will be received first by the purified and sanctified hearts of priests. It will be as if a new breach has been opened to allow the Father to pour out his graces on his divine Son, his unique priest, in whom He contemplates all priests. »»

Finally, the following admonition, which fits well with the crisis in the present Church. It means that churchgoers must wait before further disturbing unity with merciless and stubborn criticism:

«« You must understand that everything designed to destroy this work of unification between Me and the priest is diabolical, and that everything not tending to construct unity is false and does not lead to Heaven. »»

Illustration at the beginning of this article:

Patriarch Bartholomew I of the Orthodox Church assists at Papal Holy Mass in the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit in Istanbul on Nov. 29, 2006, during the official visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Turkey.

Programme:

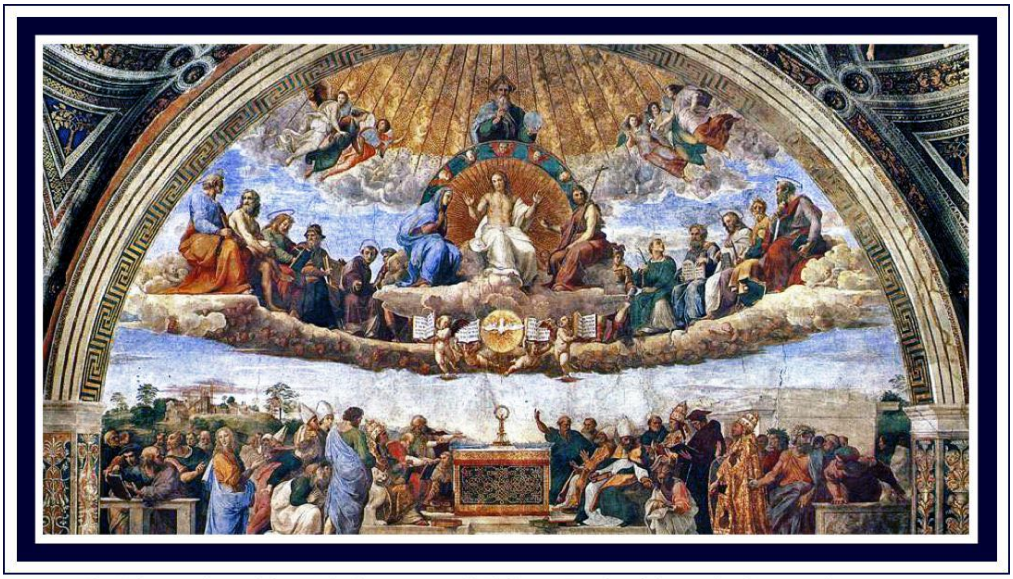
28 nov. Pope Benedict XVI arrives in Ankara where he meets Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan; visits the mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, founder of the modern republic; and then meets President Ahmet Necdet Sezer.

29 nov. Pope goes to Ephesus to celebrate Mass at the site where the Most Blessed Virgin Mary was taken to heaven and then goes to Istanbul to meet Patriarch Bartholomew I, spiritual leader of the Orthodox Church, for first of series of encounters.

1 dec. Pope visits Haghia Sophia (a 6th-century Christian church converted into mosque in 1453 and a model for all other mosques built afterwards. It was transformed into museum in 1935; Pope also visits the Blue Mosque.

Part 6 – Ch.3

'THE CHURCH VICTORIOUS'



The Disputation of the Holy Sacrament (1509) – a Raphael fresco in the papal apartments

Our previous article discussed the brochure 'The Church and the Ministry', published by the Dutch Dominicans, in which a new organisation was advocated of priests and people, to be joined together in the so-called centre for faith and spirituality, to address the lack of priestly vocations and the emptying of churches. It is typical of our time to seek the solution to a problem in an appropriate form of organization, in structures and consultative bodies. Their organizational plan would meet present-day religious needs. It seems appropriate to comment on this, now that on April 8, 2008, the national bishops responded through a pastoral letter: 'Church, Eucharist and Priesthood'.

55 – Do nothing and wait for the Promise

But how can a new type of organisation satisfy those needs if the essence is a crisis of faith? For as the bishops state, "*the crisis of vocations is in a broader context of a crisis of faith and a crisis of succession, indeed, a certain cultural crisis.*" There have been other crises. The Dominicans pretend that we are in a previously unfamiliar situation. This is in some ways the case, but not as regards the lack of priests and the all-present crisis of belief. The Church has never had an easy time, since each generation has to discover the Lord anew. Take the 13th century for instance. The previous century had been one of an exceptional flourishing of the Church, but the autumn soon came. In the early years of the 13th century Francis of Assisi had a dream in which God called him to rebuild His fallen Church. When he awoke, he immediately seized a trowel and began to collect stones to restore the ruined church in which he had spent the night. But very soon he understood that God's wish was otherwise, and the he started with his preaching on repentance and penance. That was what the Church needed at the time! Constructing buildings, modern structures – beautiful things, but they miss the heart of the matter. God is a beggar who goes round knocking on doors and asking: "Please may I lodge here?" The King of the Universe, dressed in incomparable majesty and glory, wishes to lodge with us. He longs to do so, and He speaks to us sinners with

respect and softly beckoning HE asks: May I?" Faith is thus more important than a structure.

Let us be sure of what we are saying. The starting point of the Early Church was not a management plan. In the forty days before his Ascension, do you think that Christ found it necessary to hold a brainstorming session with a flip chart presentation where, dressed in a three-piece suit, He drew up his plan? I think not. But He did speak about things concerning his Kingdom, and when He was finished He said: "You may do nothing and you must wait on the Promise". Do nothing: what a strange task! The promise? Yes, the promise, the promise of the Holy Spirit. And that Holy Spirit is still at work, though no longer in such a sensational manner. No more tongues of fire and no house-shaking whirlwind.

preparatory drawing for the Disputa, placed bottom left in final composition

56 – The Church Triumphant and the Church Militant

Before focusing on the promise of the Holy Spirit in relation to our subject, I would first like to draw your attention to the forty days of Jesus' preaching on the things pertaining to the Kingdom (the period between resurrection and ascension). The whole of Christology can be placed under this term. A synonym for 'kingdom' in this context is 'theocracy'. This is already within our grasp for those parts of our personal life and the social set-up in which we strive for it, using the means of grace offered to us by the Holy Church.[131)]

The theocracy, or the Kingdom of God, exists everywhere where the Church Militant on earth and the Church Triumphant above are united with one another. In this context I am forced to think of the tremendous fresco painted by Raphael in the papal apartments and known as "The Disputation of the Holy Sacrament".[132)] This fresco can be seen as a portrayal of the unification of the Church Militant below, and the Church Triumphant above. These are not independent of each other. Thanks to the bond

131) In the light of the gifts of grace offered to us by the Church, we can state without exaggeration that the twenty centuries that God has thus far granted to humanity have been lost insofar that they have been scarcely used, at least insufficiently.

between these two bodies, the Church Militant here below is also a Victorious Church. If that bond were to fail, the world would be abandoned to the forces of destruction.

Rafaëls schildering is rondom de Heilige Geest en de monstrans gedrapeerd die de gewijde Hostie bevat, staande op het altaar. Menselijke figuren, geconcentreerd op en in aanbidding van de Heilige Hostie, zijn als elementen van de zegevierende en van de strijdende Kerk in twee halve cirkels opgesteld, de een boven de ander. God de Vader, in hemelse glorie badend, zendt de Heilige Geest uit over de menigte van bijbelse en kerkelijke figuren, die – al delibererend over de Hostie – de Heilige Mis onderschrijven. Beneden in de compositie staan in een uitgebreid landschap, dat door het altaar, het eucharistisch Offer en de Heilige Geest worden overheerst, heiligen, pausen, bisschoppen, priesters en de menigte van gelovigen. Zij vertegenwoordigen de strijdende Kerk hier op aarde, die destijds heldhaftigheid heeft betoond en dat ook zal blijven doen, wijl zij met het geestesoog de Heilige Drievuldigheid aanschouwt. Doorheen het altijddurende Offer van de Hostie smeekt zij de bijstand af van de boven hen tronende zegevierende Kerk.

The risen Christ sits on a throne of clouds between the Most Holy Virgin - bowed in adoration, and St. John the Baptist, who, according to iconographic tradition, points to Christ. The apostles, evangelists and martyrs of the Old and New Testament are seated around this central group on a semicircular bank of clouds similar to that which constitutes the throne of Christ. They form a composed and silent crowd, and although they are painted with large fields of colour, these figures are highly individualised. Following a 15th-century tradition, Raphael has placed portraits of famous personalities,

132) The four “Stanze di Raffaello” are a suite of reception rooms, which form the public part of the papal apartments. A stanza is a unit in poetry, or otherwise, within a larger context (the term means stopping place in Italian). The Stanze di Raffaello are famous for their frescoes painted by Raphael and his studio. Together with Michelangelo’s ceiling frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, these are the grand fresco sequences that mark the High Renaissance in Rome. The Stanze, as they are invariably called, were originally intended for the suite of apartments of Pope Julius II. He commissioned Raphael and his studio in 1508 or 1509 to redecorate the existing interiors of the rooms entirely. They are on the 3rd floor overlooking the Belvedere Courtyard. (see Wikipedia)

both alive and dead, among the people in the crowd. For instance, the first architect of the St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Donato Brabant, is shown leaning on the balustrade on the left. Pope Julius II, who personifies Gregory the Great, is seated near the altar. Dante is visible on the right, distinguished by his laurel wreath. Among them are also the famous teachers of the Church, including Dominic, Francis, Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure, as well as Dun Scotus, Nicholas of Lyra, Dante, Savonarola, and all the theologians deemed worthy for the Triumphant Church. The presence of Savonarola seems strange, but may be explained by the fact that Julius II revoked Pope Alexander VI's condemnation of him.

The scene is characterised by an extreme clarity and simplicity of its structure, which Raphael achieved through preparatory sketches, studies and drawings containing notable differences in pose. The mental legacy of other artists from his circle is clearly identifiable throughout the composition, but the layout, the gestures and the poses are original products of Raphael's search for perfection, which here reaches a degree of admirable balance and high expressive dignity. Says Giorgio Vasari, commenting on the children in the air: [133)]

> «« … four children holding open the Gospels and really, it would be impossible for any other painter to produce figures of more grace and perfection than these. The saints in the group in the air seem alive, and are remarkable for the foreshortening (of the perspective) and their depth effect. Their draperies also are varied and very beautiful, and the heads rather celestial than human, especially that of Christ, displaying all the clemency and pity, which a painting of the divine can demonstrate to mortal man. »»

At the geometric centre of this breath-taking painting is the Holy Ghost in the familiar form of a dove in a luminous circle, somewhat raised above the monstrance in the composition. In a downward motion this divine Person is moving towards the monstrance, which symbolises the gate between the earthly and the transcendental realities. The Holy Ghost descends through this gate to give his gifts to the Church Militant through the Blessed Sacrament, the incarnation of the second divine Person. And it is through this same gate that the Church Triumphant seeks its way to the Church Militant. Thanks to the gate the Church Militant will happen to be a victorious Church, despite the heavy attacks that constantly shake Her. The Biblical prophecy, that the gates of Hell will never prevail against Her, must be understood in this context. Enemies are numerous, cruel tricks and traps lie everywhere in wait for the Church. Were it not for God's immeasurable mercy, especially thanks to and by way of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, we would suffer the same fate as Sodom and Gomorra.

57 – A plan of action

With this description I want to indicate that the progress of Christ's Church on earth must be understood from the mystical point of view. The material world came into being from the invisible and is carried by it (fundamental point of belief), and the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, is carried by that same invisible. However the Church is also attacked by the same, though a different, invisible world. Thus it is that a victory can only be gained from that domain. We are partners in God's plan of

creation, but not without God's support through the means of grace that He makes available in an indissoluble union with the members of the Church Triumphant, yet not without the priesthood, because that is how God the Father intended it to be.

We have now come to the point of the grace-nature interdependence. The most tangible expression of the divine grace (an invisibility) that thanks to Jesus Christ is ours, is represented by the priesthood, which reveals itself particularly in the sacrament of the forgiveness of sins and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Indeed, it is thanks to ordination into the priesthood that human beings (in the realm of nature) are able to administer the sacraments (in the realm of grace). It is Christ Himself who deigns to allow priests, through priestly actions and words, to make transubstantiation happen (in the domain of nature) out of the spiritual domain. But that is not all. A priest is likewise endowed with a special power of blessing. A priest, being an extension of the Incarnation, acts in Persona Christi. Therefore, the priesthood stands far above an ordinary Christian, even above the position of angels, and the demons tremble before him.

- *Blessed be God.*
- *Blessed be His Holy Name.*
- *Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.*
- *Blessed be the Name of Jesus.*
- *Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart.*
- *Blessed be His Most Precious Blood.*
- *Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.*
- *Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.*
- *Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most Holy.*
- *Blessed be her Holy and Immaculate Conception.*
- *Blessed be her Glorious Assumption.*
- *Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.*
- *Blessed be Saint Joseph, her most chaste spouse.*

Let us use these means, and not allow ourselves to follow the wrong path because of a desire for action. On the contrary: we should do nothing and wait for the promise. But did the apostles do nothing, in the absolute meaning of the term? No, since it is written: *"They all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and his brothers."* I would now like to quote from my earlier article where I cited the Great Conchita of Mexico, through whose pen Jesus dictated:

> «« I wish that in all dioceses the faithful should offer up their Sunday communion for the priests, for they have a great need of the Holy Spirit. I promise that the beneficial effects will not be long in showing themselves in the Church. »»

I also quoted Gloria Polo of Columbia who had heard from Jesus:

> «« Who did you think you were, making yourself God and judging My anointed? They are 'human', and the holiness of a priest is built by his community, that prays, loves, and supports him. When a priest sins, his community is questioned, not him. »»

133) "The Lives of the Most Excellent Architects" by Giorgio Vasari - Florence (1568), under the chapter "Painters and Sculptors". (Referred to by the Columbia University Educational Department website)

These are powerful words that show that our prayers for our parish priest are not optional. The community of believers has a clear duty, practically democratic. The Second Vatican Council put it like this:

> «« …a common dignity of members deriving from their rebirth in Christ, a common grace as sons, a common vocation to perfection, one salvation, one hope and undivided charity. (…) Although by Christ's will some are established as teachers, dispensers of the mysteries and pastors for the others, there remains, nevertheless, a true equality between all with regard to the dignity and to the activity which is common to all the faithful in the building up of the Body of Christ. »» (Lumen Gentium 32)

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the death of the Saint Curé d'Ars, Pope Benedict XVI established a Year for Priests, which went from mid-2009 to mid-2010. Hence, the Apostolic Penitentiary of Rome provided the possibility of a Plenary Indulgence, in particular for priests, but also granted to all the faithful according to the form described below, which perfectly agrees with the words of Gloria Polo:

> «« The Plenary Indulgence is granted to all the faithful who are truly repentant and who, in church or in chapel, devoutly attend the divine Sacrifice of Mass and offer prayers and any good work they do that day to Jesus Christ the Eternal High Priest, for the priests of the Church, so that He may sanctify them and form them in accordance with his Heart, as long as they have made expiation for their sins through Sacramental Confession and pray in accordance with the Supreme Pontiff's intentions. »»

With my argument, I wished to show that what Conchita and Gloria Polo say may not be regarded as just so many words, but that they fit well within the sacramental economy of salvation. 'Economy' here refers to the principles and practices used by the community of believers to organise the ownership and the sharing out of the gifts of

grace. That is how simply God organises his work! All that is required is that on Sundays the Holy Mass is offered to the benefit of the serving priest and offer that day for this intention to God in order to turn the Church Militant into the Church Victorious, and this – so I understand it – to the exclusion of other intentions that, during the Mass, are lowered to the level of daily intentions. Implicitly this means that the faithful who take the matter seriously, attend Holy Mass more than once per week. It can be painful to exclude certain intentions from the endless services rendered by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, but it can be recuperated during the week. It is no reason for concern, for if we pray for the priests, then we pray for ourselves and for the Church, and when we pray for the Church we also pray for the entire world and for all those who are close to our hearts. If we believe that this is how it works, this way is within everyone's reach. Can it be any simpler?

My fervent wish is that there should be ten or more faithful in each parish who attend Holy Mass in this way every Sunday. The Old Testament gives us various examples of situations where ten people expressed a wish and their wish was granted. If there had been ten just people in Sodom and Gomorra, God would not have decided to destroy those cities. And yet even two believers would suffice, for *"where two or more are gathered together in Christ's name, God is in the midst of them."* On the condition, of course, that they must strive to increase their number to ten. And would it not be a good idea for priests to take the initiative to propose this line of action to their parishioners? This is not simply a luxury, for as Jesus had Conchita write, meaning the priests:

> «« …and when distracted by the innumerable duties of their ministry, they torture their minds to know how they will manage to reconcile their life of prayer with that involved in the tasks they have to fulfil. This unity in their life, this [purely external] putting in order of their ministry, and even the simple practice of pious acts, is impossible to accomplish from a human point of view, even if the latter favours it. »»

The approach outlined here fits in well with the pastoral letter that gave rise to this article. By way of remedy for the current crisis of faith the bishops make the case for a deepening of the life of the community of belief. If ordinary parishioners were to apply themselves according to these simple guidelines in, let us say, the centres for faith and spirituality, which the bishops call small Christian communities, God's gifts will not be long in coming! The bishops state very clearly that the Eucharist is ***"source and high point of Christian life"***. The Eucharist must never be seen as a matter of course. How right they are to say that ***"the priestly office is not merely functional but sacramental in its nature."*** Let us therefore act as if we believe this!

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APPENDIX 18

CARRY THE PARISH PRIESTS IN YOUR HEART

This presentation intends to further underline an important point of the article "The Victorious Church" also with regard to the Dutch episcopal letter "Church, Eucharist and Priesthood", and herewith some concrete proposals are given. By way of introduction, a moving story from Japan. Father Petitjean's story is taken from Beauchesne's "Encyclopédie Maria" # 1956 (tome 4, p. 27).

Retrieved from an editorial by Jan Leechburch Auwers
De Brandende Lamp (The Burning Lamp) no. 114, summer 2008

Is our heart like yours?

In 1865, Japan reopened its gates to foreigners after being completely closed for more than two centuries. Father Petitjean of the Missions Etrangères (foreign missions) of Paris disembarked at Nagasaki and established a small church in this city. He tells:

> «« One day there was a group of 12 to 15 people - men, women and children - at the door of our church. I hurried to open the church door. A woman came to me and with her hand on her heart she said to me*: "Our heart and the heart of all of us here present, is it like yours?" – "Certainly"* I answered her, *"but where are you from?" – "We are pretty much all from Urakami. Almost everyone in Urakami carries in their hearts the same feelings as us."* And immediately after, the woman asked: *"Where is the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary?"* Upon hearing this blessed name (Father Petitjean continued), I no longer had any doubts. I kept in mind that I was in the presence of ancient Christian believers in Japan. They were about fifteen thousand in number and

had kept their Catholic faith, and that without a priest in their midst. I accompanied the group to the altar of the Blessed Virgin. Filled with great joy and emotion, they all began to pray. »» [134)]

Episcopal letter 'Church, Eucharist and Priesthood'

I had been looking forward to this important church letter since fall 2007; it appeared Tuesday, June 17, 2008 (but dated April 8). Part of the reason for this letter was the distribution last year of the Dutch Dominicans' brochure "Church & Ministry". In it, theories were developed that were completely at odds with the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church. For example, it was suggested – in order to quickly get out of the impasse of the priest shortage – that each parish community should select someone from its own circle, who would thus be authorized to preside in the Eucharist, with or without the consent and blessing of the local bishop. The normal Catholic belief in Eucharist, sacrament of priesthood, in Church authority and hierarchy was thus trampled upon. You will now also understand why we pointed to the example of some 15,000 Japanese who remained faithful to the pure Catholic faith for more than two centuries, without even considering choosing anyone from among them to preside at the Eucharist.

The headquarters in Rome of the Order of Dominicans had already reacted negatively to the deplorable nature of the Church & Ministry publication. It was extremely important for our bishops to make their stand against this Dutch monstrosity. The episcopal letter was drafted as follows:

- *the Church: in search of the self-understanding of the Roman Catholic Church according to Vatican II;*
- *the Eucharist: source and culmination of all Christian life;*
- *the priesthood: not merely functional but above all sacramental in character;*
- *working together on the challenges facing dioceses and parishes;*
- *and in conclusion: the Church as an ancient spring with fresh water bubbling up.*

The initiative of the Congregation for the Clergy

The Congregation for the Clergy recently launched the Eucharistic adoration initiative to achieve sanctification of our priests. It begins its letter of Dec. 8, 2007, on the high feast of the Immaculate Conception of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, by noting that in the present circumstances there is an enormous amount of work to be done for the spiritual well-being of priests and the fecundity of their pastoral ministry. It wishes to initiate a movement from the essential link that exists between the Holy Eucharist and the functioning of the priesthood. From the special status held by the most Blessed Virgin in the Church, the Congregation for the Clergy wishes that people may arise to consecrate priests from their environment, every day, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. For she is the mother of Jesus Christ, the High Priest in eternity, with whom she is intimately united. For this reason she wishes to help all priests to grow into the image of her son, a task entrusted to her by Jesus. This initiative should culminate in a personal commitment by women and men to adopt priests in a spiritual sense and invisibly assist them by their constant prayer and sacrifice, for which ordinary life

134) Was it perhaps intentional that this very Christian Japanese city was chosen to drop one of the two American atomic bombs? Out of hatred for the Christian way of life. By the way, there are strong indications that the Japanese would have been willing to capitulate even without this catastrophe.

offers sufficient opportunities. In addition, with its initiative, the Congregation hopes to initiate a chain of everlasting Eucharistic adoration with a view to the sanctification of the clergy and the emergence of new vocations.

Prayer for priests

In the spirit of St. Theresa of Lisieux: O Jesus, eternal High Priest, protect your priests in the shelter of your Sacred Heart where nobody can harm them. Keep their anointed hands immaculate, those hands that daily touch your Holy Body. Keep pure their lips that are stained red with your Precious Blood. Keep their hearts pure and raised above earthly things, hearts sealed by the sacred sign of the priesthood. Let them grow in love and faithfulness to You and safeguard them from contamination by the world. Give them power over hearts, as they have the power to transform bread and wine. Bless their work with rich fruits and finally give them the crown of everlasting life. Amen.

APPENDIX 19

HOW THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS WAS KNOCKED FROM ITS THRONE

The New Mass or “Novus Ordo Missae”, or NOM for short, is the elaboration of the conciliar decision of December 4, 1963, under the name “Sacrosanctum Concilium” (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy). This envisioned a more active participation of the faithful during celebration, which was a commendable endeavor, since at the time it was almost non-existent. However, the elaboration of the constitution was of a completely different caliber and took absolutely no account of the official guidelines. As early as 1965, on the basis of Sacrosanctum Concilium, a valid instruction for the celebration of Mass appeared, but it did not last long. There have been a number of incremental changes since the introduction of the Tridentine Mass (Mass of the Council of Trent, a council that was held intermittently from 1545 to 1563). The first change occurred as early as 34 years after its introduction. It should be noted that the Tridentine Mass brought nothing new but formalized what already existed. A change also came under Pope John XXIII and that was in 1962, so before the Second Vatican Council had even begun. But that was still within the traditional teaching. What took place with the NOM was a rite change, which constituted an unprecedented break with past practice. It was not a logical consequence of the council decisions and did not conform to any established practice or attitude of faith. It was decreed by a recalcitrant section of the College of Cardinals and was in fact an outgrowth of the so-called New Liturgical Movement with names such as the Belgian Dom Beauduin (1873-1960) and Cardinal Mercier (1851-1926), also of Belgian origin.

"The Novus Ordo Missae represents, as a whole and in detail, a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Holy Mass as it was formulated in the 22nd Session of the Council of Trent, which, by fixing definitively the canons of the rite, erected an insurmountable barrier against any heresy which might attack the integrity of the Mystery." It was with these words that Cardinals Alfredo Ottaviani and Antonio Bacci addressed Pope Paul VI on Sept. 3, 1969 – the feast day of Saint Pius X – when they presented the "Breve Esame Critico del Novus Ordo Missæ" (Brief Critical Examination of the NOM) to the Pope, already several weeks after the NOM had come into force. The Breve Esame Critico was distributed in 2005 at the behest of Pope John-Paul II on the occasion of the Year of the Eucharist, with the Pope taking the opportunity to finally end the banishment of the Tridentine Mass.

The Breve Esame Critico says that the NOM is not an ode to God, but on the contrary, an accumulation of dishonor. It continues that it is human-centered rather than God-centered. That is why it is performed with its back to the tabernacle and facing the public, deletes the Gloria and the Offertory and mutilates the Creed, ignores the intercession of the saints and the remembrance of souls in Purgatory and also everything that expresses the personal sacrifice of the priest. It deletes the prayers of Pope Leo XIII at the end and, of course, replaces Latin with the vernacular. This rite is the loud echo of Modernism, which was called *"the aggregation of all heresies"* by Pius X in his 1907 encyclical: "Pascendi Dominici Gregis". It blatantly seeks to dilute the meaning of the Real Presence as well as that of the ordained priesthood. It denigrates the sacrificial and atoning character of the Holy Mass. This rite attempts to reduce the Holy Eucharist to a communal love meal that is far from a renewal of the Sacrifice of the Cross. The latter is one of the central dogmas of our Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, and cannot be tampered with.

Monsignor Klaus Gamber is recognized as one of the best liturgists of the 20th century. He concludes on the reform of the liturgy**:** *"Obviously, the reformers wanted a completely new liturgy, a liturgy that differed from the traditional one in spirit as well as in form; and in no way a liturgy that represented what the Council Fathers had envisioned, i.e., a liturgy that would meet the pastoral needs of the faithful."* He deprecates *"the cold breath of realism that now pervades our worship"*.[135)] How these changes were incorporated is exemplified by Pope Benedict XVI, then the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in his foreword to the French translation of 1992 of Gamber's book on the reform (German edition 1981). Surprisingly, the foreword was refused. It read as follows:[136)] *"I too lived through that period. I am speaking from experience, since I too lived through that period with all its hopes and its confusion. And I have seen how arbitrary deformations of the liturgy caused deep pain to individuals totally rooted in the faith of the Church."* This remark ties in with what he remarks on the turn of the millennium in the "Spirit of Liturgy": *"Anyone who nowadays advocates the continuing existence of the old Latin liturgy or takes part in it, is treated like a leper; all tolerance ends here. There has never been anything like this in history; in doing so we are despising and proscribing the Church's whole past."*

It is precisely this principle of the sanctified past, called tradition for short, to which the sixteenth century Reformers took offence. The NOM has therefore been called a 'reformational infringement'. The paradigm of the Reformation movements about the

135) "The Reform of the Roman Liturgy: Its Problems and Background" (pp. 100, 13).

essence of the tradition is the great divide between Protestantism and Rome, and it is this breach that the heretical Pope Francis wants to bridge. All in the name of the many-headed monster of oecumenism. Apparently, no council is needed for that. Bergoglio (alias Pope Francis) just does what he feels like doing.

De Breve Esame Critico concludes:

> «« When the Novus Ordo was presented at the Vatican Press Office, it was impudently asserted that conditions, which prompted the decrees of the Council of Trent, no longer exist. Not only do these decrees still apply today, but conditions now are infinitely worse. It was precisely to repel those snares which in every age threaten the pure Deposit of Faith, that the Church, under divine inspiration, set up dogmatic definitions and doctrinal pronouncements as her defenses. These, in turn, immediately influenced her worship, which became the most complete monument to her faith.
>
> Trying to return this worship to the practices of Christian antiquity and recreating artificially the original spontaneity of ancient times is to engage in that *"unhealthy archaeologism",* Pius XII so roundly condemned. It is, moreover, to dismantle all the theological ramparts erected for the protection of the rite and to take away all the beauty which enriched it for centuries. And all this at one of the most critical moments – if not the most critical moment – in the Church's history.
>
> Today, division and schism are officially acknowledged to exist not only outside the Church, but within her as well. The Church's unity is not only threatened, but has already been tragically compromised. Errors against the Faith are not merely insinuated, but are, as has been likewise acknowledged, now forcibly imposed through liturgical abuses and aberrations. To abandon a liturgical tradition which for four centuries stood as a sign and pledge of unity in worship, and to replace it with another liturgy which, due to the countless liberties it implicitly authorizes, cannot be but a sign of division. A liturgy which teems with insinuations or manifest errors against the integrity of the Catholic Faith is – we feel bound in conscience to proclaim – an incalculable error. »»

The breach with the traditional Mass was accomplished in two ways. First, in the accompanying theological motivation in which the sacredness and sacrificial nature of the Real Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ [the transsubstantiation] is fatally refuted, while an almost obsessive emphasis is placed on the 'communal meal'. Second, the liturgy itself is compromised in essential ways. The Breve Esame Critico manages to articulate this excellently, quoting here just a few aspects.

Quotation: The reason why the principle of a sacrifice is no longer explicitly mentioned is simple: the central role of the Real Presence [of Christ] has been suppressed. This central role was so splendidly expressed in the Eucharistic liturgy of the Roman Missal of St. Pius V (1566-1572). In the General Instruction of the NOM, the Real Presence is mentioned just once, and that in a footnote which is the only reference to the Council of Trent. Here again, the context is that of [corporal] nourishment. The

136) Una Voce America, 2013, no 48.

real and permanent Presence of Christ in the transsubstantiated Species: Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity - is never alluded to. The very word transsubstantiation is completely ignored.

The invocation of the Holy Spirit in the Offertory – the prayer "Come, Thou Sanctifier" – has likewise been suppressed, with its petition that He descend upon the offerings to accomplish the miracle of the Divine Presence again, just as He once descended into the Virgin's womb. This suppression is one more in a series of denials and degradations of the Real Presence, both tacit and systematic.

Finally, it is impossible to neglect the suppressions or changes that implicitly repudiate the faith in the Real Presence. The New Mass Order removed:

a) Genuflections. No more than three remain for the priest, and – with certain exceptions – one of the faithful at the moment of the Consecration. [Now, in 2025, almost nobody kneels anymore.]
b) Purification of the priest's fingers over the chalice.
c) Preserving the priest's fingers from all profane contact after the Consecration.
d) Purification of sacred vessels, which need not be done immediately, nor has it to be made on the corporal.
e) Protecting the contents of the chalice with a piece of stiffened linen, the palla.
f) Gilding for the interior of sacred vessels.
g) Solemn consecration for movable altars.
h) Consecrated stones and relics of the saints in the movable altar or on the 'table' when Mass is celebrated outside a sacred place. [This omission is a tacit invitation to 'eucharistic dinners' in private homes.]
i) Three cloths on the altar – reduced to one.
j) Thanksgiving for the Eucharist made kneeling, now replaced by the grotesque practice of the priest and people sitting to make their thanksgiving – a logical corollary to receiving communion standing upright.
k) All the ancient prescriptions observed in the case of a consecrated Host that has fallen to the ground, are now reduced to a single, nearly sarcastic instruction: *"It is to be picked up reverently"*. (unquote)

The question is legitimate whether this also obstructs the miracle of transsubstantiation, which a number of Cardinal Lefèbvre's followers answer affirmatively out of their love for Jesus and his Church. To them, there is no transsubstantiation. Even though the NOM represents a radical breach with the past, it can be argued on the basis of a number of arguments that if the New Mass is performed and attended with the required reverence and intention, the Almighty God will not hesitate to perform the miracle at the utterance of the consecration words, which in the NOM are also Biblically founded, albeit somewhat different from the Tridentine Mass. They are therefore valid words of consecration.[137] **By virtue of giving that due reverence, one distances oneself from the apostate and ambiguous theology with which the NOM was introduced at the time.** The NOM may not be invalid if celebrated in this way, but the gifts of grace will undoubtedly be less than at the traditional Mass, the latest version of

137) The correct wording of the words of consecration is extremely important without which there is no transsubstantiation. The intention is equally important. If that were not the case it would become a magical formula, a kind of Tibetan prayer wheel.

which is that of 1962, still essentially a Tridentine Mass. It should not be overlooked that the NOM was ratified by a legitimite pope, which aligns with Jesus' Word in Mathew 18:18: *"Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on Earth will be bound in Heaven."*

Of no small importance in the discussion of the validity of the NOM are the Eucharistic miracles that have occurred at celebrations according to that model in many places around the world. To name a few: in 1996 there was a very remarkable Eucharistic miracle in Buenes Aires involving Cardinal Bergoglio; in 1999 there was a Eucharistic miracle in Lourdes, witnessed by many; in Dec. 2013 a Eucharistic miracle took place in Legnica, Poland; in Nov. 2015 there was a Eucharistic miracle in Kearns in the United States; in Febr. 2016 there was a Eucharistic miracle in Anpka in Nigeria.

Regarding the validity of the NOM regarding the miracle of transsubstantiation, I refer to important prophets since its introduction, such as JNSR, who directly or indirectly endorse its validity. To dispell any doubts, here is a quote from the Book of Truth given on Maundy Thursday, April 5, 2012:

> «« Before I was crucified I attended a very important Passover Supper with my Apostles the night before my Death on the Cross. This Last Supper provides another special gift: the gift of celebrating the Holy Eucharist is a sacrament of love to provide you with a unique gift where you can truly receive Me in Holy Communion. My true Presence – contained in the Holy Eucharist in the world today when celebrated during Holy Mass – provides very special graces to those in a state of grace, who love Me, who receive Me. My Presence can be felt in a way which will strengthen your faith **when you accept my True Presence in the Holy Eucharist**. If you reject my Presence in the Holy Eucharist you reject one of the most significant gifts I left behind when I came to earth to atone for your sins. »»

As for the intention of the celebrant, this has always been extremely important. If it is missing, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass could be invalidated, taking into account that in this intention the faithful also participate, who, as scribe understands, can compensate for the lack of zeal by the priest. I now quote Pope Innocent III (De Sacro Altaris Mysterio 3:6): *"Not only do the priests offer the sacrifice, but also all the faithful: for what the priest does personally by virtue of his ministry, the faithful do collectively* ***by virtue of their intention****."* Saint Robert Bellarmine (1542-621) says: *"The sacrifice is principally offered in Persona Christi. Thus the oblation that follows the consecration is a sort of attestation that the whole Church* ***consents in the oblation made by Christ and offers it along with Him****."* (De Missa 1:27)

I also quote Pope Pius XII from his Encyclical Mediator Dei, 1947 (§ 87-88, 92-93):

> «« The rites and prayers of the Eucharistic Sacrifice signify and show no less clearly that the oblation of the Victim is made by the priests 'in company with the people'. For not only does the sacred minister, after the oblation of the bread and wine when he turns to the people, say the significant prayer: *"Pray brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty"*, but also the prayers by which the divine Victim is offered to God are generally expressed in the plural form: and in these it is indicated more than once that the people also participate in this august Sacrifice inasmuch as they offer the same. (…) Nor is it to be wondered at, that the faithful should be raised to this dignity. By the waters of baptism, as by common right, Christians

are made members of the Mystical Body of Christ the High Priest, and by the 'character' which is imprinted on their souls, they are appointed to give worship to God. **Thus they participate, according to their condition, in the priesthood of Christ**.

(…) For this highly important subject, lest a dangerous mistake be avoided, it is necessary that we know here the exact meaning of the word 'sacrifice'. The unbloody immolation at the words of consecration, when Christ is made present upon the altar in the state of a victim, is performed by the priest and by him alone, as the representative 'of Christ' and not as the representative of the faithful. This happens because it is the priest who places the Divine Victim upon the altar by which he offers it to God the Father as an oblation for the glory of the Blessed Trinity and for the good of the whole Church [and for those who do not yet belong to the Church]. Now the faithful participate in the oblation, understood in this limited sense, after their own fashion and in twofold manner: namely, because they not only offer the Sacrifice by the hands of the priest, **but also, to a certain extent, in union with him**. It is by reason of this participation that the offering made by the people is also included in liturgical worship.

(…) **The conclusion that the people offer the Sacrifice with the priest himself is 'not' based on the fact that, being members of the Church no less than the priest himself, they perform a visible liturgical rite; for this is the privilege only of the minister who has been divinely appointed to this office: rather it is based on the fact that the people unite their hearts in praise, impetration, expiation and thanksgiving with the prayers or intention of the priest, even of the High Priest himself, so that in the one and same offering of the Victim and according to a visible sacerdotal rite, they may be presented to God the Father**. »»

The logical inference is that those present at Holy Mass can, by their intentions through the High Priest Jesus Christ, inscribe the Sacrifice of the Mass in the Single Sacrifice of the Cenacle. And thus in Persona Christi the miracle takes place, even if the celebrant should have a totally wrong intention or none at all, even not the beginning of an intention. It seems reasonable to assume that the intention of the churchgoer(s) can make up for the priest's failure for the miracle to take place. Let's face it, the priestly intention will almost always be imperfect and that applies a forteriori to the churchgoers. But that is also the case with another sacrament, Confession, in which the confessor will be forgiven with imperfect contrition, if the priest gives his absolution and the confessor has the firm intention to mend his ways and if he has not concealed any sins at his Confession out of a sense of shame. If the celebrant did not celebrate in Persona Christi, most of the Eucharistic celebrations would be invalidated (this also applies to the Tridentine Mass), due to minor or major sins of the celebrant and due to a far from perfect intention by him and the faithful.

It is thus that we may conceive of the words just quoted in the Book of Truth: *"My Presence can be felt in a way which will strengthen your faith* ***when you accept my True Presence in the Holy Eucharist****. If you reject my Presence in the Holy Eucharist you reject one of the most significant gifts I left behind when I came to earth to atone for your sins."*

Ad majorem Dei gloriam !!

APPENDIX 20

Message 422 from the Book of Truth

New ways to administer my Holy Eucharist, which are insulting.

Monday, May 7th 2012, 06:19 PM

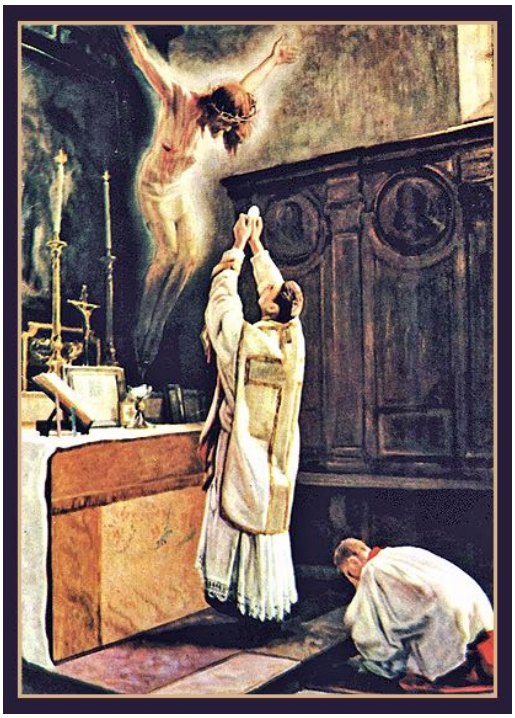
My dearly beloved daughter, to My churches through the world I say this:

Know that I will always be with you at your side as long as your proclaim my Most Holy Word. To my Catholic Church, even though you caused torment as a result of evil sin know that I will never forsake you, although you have sinned.

But know this:

Your faith in Me is not as strong as it should be. You do not love Me as you once did. All the wealth you accumulated put a distance between Me, your Christ and Savour and God's ordinary children. You scaled such lofty heights that I could not reach up to you and offer you my hand to salvage you from the rot within your core.

You were taught the truth by my Peter upon whose rock you were built. And what did you do? You built thick stone walls around you. This caused a lack of communication with those whom you needed to feed with my Body and Blood so that their souls could be nourished.



The respect required of you in administering my Most Holy Eucharist was lost when you demeaned my Presence.

When Vatican II declared new rules they were introduced by those evil Masonic forces from within your corridors. They cunningly presented new ways to administer my Holy Eucharist which are insulting to Me.

Your so called tolerant teachings proclaimed a series of lies including the refusal to acknowledge the power of St Michael the Archangel. He is the protector of the Church against Satan. Those forces among you knew this. This is why you stopped all prayers requesting his help before Mass.

Then you perpetrated the biggest untruth that Hell was not to be feared. That it was just a metaphor. For this lie, accepted as the truth by many of God's children, has meant the loss of billions of souls.

How you offend Me. For those humble and sacred servants among you I ask that you go back to my Teachings.

Never allow riches to accumulate amongst you and think that they are acceptable in my eyes. Riches, gold and power accumulated in my Name will be your downfall. You cannot profit from my Holy Word.

You have suffered because of the way you have offended Me.

Never think that I am blaming the many Holy Popes who have sat in the Seat of Peter. Their mission has always been protected. Many Popes have been prisoners in the Holy See, surrounded by Masonic groups who do not represent God.

They hate God and have spent fifty years spreading untruths about the Mercy of God. Their works have led to the collapse of the Catholic Church. This was not an accident. It was deliberately and cunningly plotted in order to destroy the faith of the Church. To destroy the homage of ordinary Catholics to the one true God.

For this you will now be cast aside into the wilderness. After Pope Benedict you will be led by Me from the Heavens.

Oh how you have made Me weep.

I call on all of my sacred servants who know the truth to stand up and follow Me, your Jesus, to spread the truth of my Teachings in humble servitude. You must find the courage and the strength to rise from the ashes.

Above all, reject the lies which will shortly be presented to you by the False Prophet [the next Pope]. He will merge the Catholic Church with other churches, including pagan churches, to become one abomination. A “One World Church” without a soul.

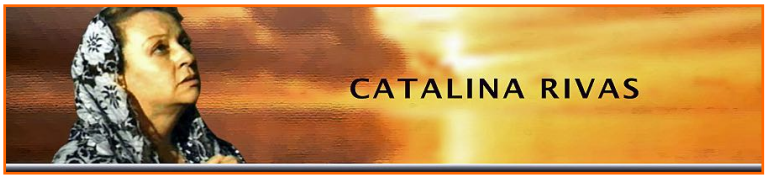
Your Jesus

APPENDIX 21

What is the Right Intention during Holy Mass?

Excerpts from the booklet: "The Holy Mass, explained to Catalina by Jesus and Mary", with imprimator by Monseigneur José Barahona C. El Salvador - San Vicente, March 2nd 2004. An Imprimator on the first part of her more extensive writings was given in 1998 by Monseigneur René Fernandez Apaza, the Archbisshop of Cochabamba in Bolivia.

Catalina Rivas of Cochabamba, Bolivia, who received these messages, now dwells in Mexico. Daniel Gagnon, OMI, of the Commission for the Doctrine of the Faith of the Archdiocese of Mexico, wrote about this booklet: *"I do not find anything against the faith or the customs of the Church. It is not my function to confirm its supernatural character; nevertheless, I recommend it for its spiritual inspiration."* Her Messages started in the first half of 1990 and have been published in 8 parts in 1998. (www.loveandmercy.org)



EXCERPTS OF THE WORDS OF THE VIRGIN MARY AND OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Most Holy Virgin Mary says:

"Why must you all arrive at the last moment? You should have arrived earlier to be able to pray and ask the Lord to send his Holy Spirit that He may grant you a spirit of peace and cleanse you of the spirit of the world, your worries, your problems, and your distractions so as to enable you to live this so sacred a moment. However, you arrive almost when the celebration is about to commence, and you participate as if it is an ordinary event, without any spiritual preparation. Why? This is the greatest of Miracles. You are going to live the moment when the Most High God gives his greatest gift, and you do not know how to appreciate it.

I want you to be attentive to the readings and to all of the homily of the priest. Remember that the Bible says that the Word of God does not return without bearing fruit. If you are attentive, something from all that you heard will remain in you. You should try to recall, all day long, those Words that left an impression on you. It may be two verses, other times the reading of the entire Gospel, or perhaps only one word. Savor them for the rest of the day, and it will then become part of you, because that is the way to change one's

life, by allowing the Word of God to transform you. And now, tell the Lord that you are here to listen, that you want Him to speak to your heart today.

(At the beginning of the Offertory:) Pray like this: 'Lord, I offer all that I am, all that I have, all that I can. I put everything into your Hands. Build it up, Lord, with the little thing that I am. By the merits of your Son, transform me, God Almighty. I petition You for my family, for my benefactors, for each member of our Apostolate, for all the people who fight against us, for those who commend themselves to my poor prayers. Teach me to lay down my heart as if on the ground before them, so that their walk may be less severe.' This is how the saints prayed; this is how I want all of you to do it.

(Not long after:) There are the Guardian Angels of the people who are offering this Holy Mass for many intentions, those who are conscious of what this celebration means. They have something to offer the Lord. Offer yourselves at this moment; offer your sorrows, your pains, your hopes, your sadness, your joys, your petitions. Remember that the Mass has infinite value. Therefore, be generous in offering and in asking. Behind the first Angels are others who have nothing in their hands; they are coming empty handed. Those are the angels of the people who are here but never offer anything; who have no interest in living each liturgical moment of the Mass. And they have no gifts to carry before the Altar of the Lord.

These are the Guardian Angels of the people who are here, but do not want to be, that is to say, of the people who have been forced to come here, who have come out of obligation, but without any desire to participate in the Holy Mass. The angels go forth sadly because they have nothing to carry to the Altar, except for their own prayers.

Do not sadden your Guardian Angel. Ask for much, ask for the conversion of sinners, for peace in the world, for your families, your neighbors, for those who ask for your prayers. Ask, ask for much, but not only for yourselves, but for everyone else.

Remember that the offering which most pleases the Lord is when you offer yourselves as a holocaust so that Jesus, upon his descent, may transform you by his own merits. What do you have to offer the Father by yourselves? Nothingness and sin. But the offering of oneself united to the merits of Jesus, that is an offering that is pleasing to the Father.

(When the moment of Consecration arrived Catalina noticed with her spiritual eye behind the officiating Archbishop a number of persons:) These are all the Saints and the Blessed of Heaven, and among them are the souls of your relatives who already enjoy the Presence of God. It surprises you to see me standing a little behind Monsignor (the Archbishop), does it not? This is how it should be… With all the love that my son gives me (the Virgin Mary), He has not given me the dignity that He gave the priests as to be able to perform the daily Miracle with my hands as is done with their priestly hands. Because of this, I feel a deep respect for priests and for the miracle that God carries out through them, which compels me to kneel here behind them.

(Then she saw a number of vale grey figures:) These are the blessed souls of Purgatory, who await your prayers to be refreshed. Do not stop praying for them. These poor souls will plead for you in return, but they cannot pray for themselves. It is you who have to pray for them, in order to help them depart so that they can be with God and enjoy Him eternally.

Now you now see it; I am here all the time. People go on pilgrimages, searching for the places where I have appeared. This is good, because of all the graces that they will receive there. But during no apparition, in no other place, am I more present than during the Holy Mass. You will always find me at the foot of the Altar where the Eucharist is celebrated; at the foot of the Tabernacle, I remain with the angels because I am always with Him."

Now follows a description of Catalina's vision at the very moment of the Sanctus: "To see that beautiful countenance of the Mother at that moment of the words 'Holy, Holy, Holy…' as well as all the others with their radiant faces, with hands joined, awaiting that Miracle which repeats itself continuously, was to be in Heaven itself. And to think there are people who can, at that moment, be distracted in conversation… It hurts me to tell you, many men, more than women, stand with their arms crossed, as if paying homage to the Lord as one equal to another." The Virgin Mary said: "Tell all people that never is a man more human then when he bends his knees before God!"

Catalina describes her vision: "The celebrant said the words of the Consecration. He was a person of normal height, but suddenly, he began to grow, becoming filled with light, a supernatural light between white and gold that enveloped him and grew very strong around the face. And because of it, I could not see its features. When he raised the Host, I

saw his hands, and on the back of his hands, he had some marks from which emanated a great deal of light. IT WAS JESUS! It was Him who was wrapping his Body around the celebrant, as if He were lovingly surrounding the hands of the Archbishop. At that moment, the Host began to grow and became enormous, and upon it the marvelous face of Jesus appeared looking at his people."

By instinct, I wanted to bow my head, and Our Lady said: "Do not look down. Look up to view and contemplate Him. Exchange your gaze with His, and repeat the prayer of Fatima: 'Lord, I believe, I adore, I trust, and I love You. I ask pardon for those who do not believe, do not adore, do not trust, and do not love You. Forgiveness and Mercy…' Now tell Him how much you love Him, and pay your homage to the King of Kings."

The description continues: "Thereafter the Archbishop said the words of the Consecration of the wine and, as the words were being said, lightning appeared from the heavens and in the background. The walls and ceiling of the church had disappeared. All was dark, but for that brilliant light from the Altar.

Suddenly, suspended in the air, I saw Jesus crucified. I saw Him from the head to the lower part of the chest. The cross beam of the Cross was sustained by some large, strong hands. From within this resplendent light, a small light, like a very brilliant, very small dove, came forth and flew swiftly all through the Church. It came to rest on the left shoulder of the Archbishop, who continued to appear as Jesus because I could distinguish his long hair, his luminous wounds, and his large body, but I could not see his Face. Above was Jesus crucified.

His head had sunk down upon his right shoulder. I was able to contemplate his face, violated arms and torn flesh. On the right side of his chest, He had an injury, from which blood was gushing out toward the left side, and something resembling water deviated to the right, as it was very brilliant. These were more like jets of light coming forth towards the faithful, and moving to the right and to the left. I was amazed at the amount of blood that was flowing out toward the Chalice. I thought it would overflow and stain the whole Altar, but not a single drop was spilled."

At that moment, the Virgin Mary said: "**This is the Miracle of miracles. I have said to you before that the Lord is not constrained by time and space. At the moment of the Consecration, all the assembly of those present is taken to the foot of Calvary, at the instant of Jesus' crucifixion.**"

When we were going to pray the Our Father, the Lord spoke for the first time during the celebration, and said: "Wait, I want you to pray with the deepest profundity which you can summon. At this moment, bring to mind that person or persons which have done you the greatest harm during your life, so that you embrace them close to your bosom, and tell them with all your heart: 'In the Name of Jesus, I forgive you and wish you peace. In the Name of Jesus, I ask for your forgiveness and wish my peace.' If the person is worthy of that peace, then the person will receive it, and feel better for it. If that person is not capable of opening up to that peace, then peace will return to your heart. But I do not want you to receive nor offer peace when you are not capable of forgiving and feeling that peace in your heart first."

Be careful of what you do (continued the Lord): "You repeat in the Our Father 'forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us'. If you are capable of forgiving but not forgetting, as some people use to say, you are placing conditions upon God's forgiveness. You then actually say: 'You forgive me only to the extent that I am able to forgive, no more and no less.'"

Catalina sighs: "I do not know how to explain my pain, at the realization of how much we can hurt the Lord. And also how much we can injure ourselves by holding so many grudges, bad feelings and unflattering things that are born from our own prejudices and over-sensitivities. I forgave; I forgave from the heart, and asked for forgiveness for all the people whom I had hurt at one time or another, in order to feel the peace of the Lord."

The moment of the celebrants' Communion arrived. There I once again noticed the presence of all the priests next to the Archbishop. When he took Communion, the Virgin Mary said: "This is the moment to pray for the celebrant and the priests who accompany him. Repeat together with Me: 'Lord, bless them, sanctify them, help them, purify them, love them, take care of them, and support them with your Love. Remember all the priests of the world, pray for all the consecrated souls.'"

During the Communion of the worshippers was a woman of whom Catalina knew that went to confession just before the Holy Mass. When the Priest placed the Sacred Host on her tongue, a flash of light, like a very golden white light, went right through this person, first through her back, then surrounding her from the back, around her shoulders, and then her head. The Lord said: "This is how I Myself rejoice in embracing a soul who comes with a clean heart to receive Me."

When I went to receive communion, Jesus told me: "The Last Supper was the moment of the greatest intimacy with my own. During that hour of love, I established what could be thought of as the greatest act of lunacy in the eyes of men, that of making Myself a prisoner of Love. I established the Eucharist. I wanted to remain with you until the end of the centuries because my Love could not bear that you remained orphans, you whom I loved more than my life."

The Lord allowed me to witness the prayer of a woman: "Lord, remember that we are at the end of the month, and I do not have the money to pay the rent, the car payments, nor the children's school. You have to do something to help me… Please, make my husband stop drinking so much. I cannot bear any more his being intoxicated so often, and my youngest son will be going to repeat the year again, if you do not help him. He has exams this week… And do not forget our neighbor who must move. Let her do it right away. I cannot stand her anymore!"

Jesus said in a sad tone: "Did you take note of her prayer? Not a single time did she tell Me that she loves Me. Not a single time did she thank Me for the gift that I have given her by bringing down my Divinity to her poor humanity, in order to elevate her to Me. Not a single time has she said: 'Thank You, Lord.' It has been a litany of requests, and so are almost all of those who come to receive Me. I have died for love, and I am risen. For love I await each one of you, and for love I remain with you… But you do not realize that

I need your love. Remember that I am the Beggar of Love in this sublime hour for the soul."

When the celebrant was going to give the blessing, the Holy Virgin said: "Be attentive, take care… You make a meaningless gesture instead of a sign of the cross. Remember that this blessing could be the last one that you will receive from hands of a priest. You do not know when, leaving here, if you will die or not. You do not know if you will have the opportunity to receive a blessing from another priest. Those consecrated hands are giving you the blessing in the Name of the Holy Trinity. Therefore, make the Sign of the Cross with respect, as if it was the last one of your life."

Jesus asked me to remain with Him a few minutes more after Mass had finished. He said: "Don't leave in a hurry when Mass is over. Stay a moment in my company and enjoy it, and let Me enjoy yours. (…) All that time that you want to have Me with you. If you like talking to Me all day long and grant Me a few words during your chores, I will listen to you. I am always with you. It is you who leave Me. Once Mass has finished, so has your day of obligation. You have honored the day of the Lord and for you it's closing time. It does not occur to you that I would like to share your family life, not that day anyway!"

The other thing that the Lord spoke about with pain concerned people who encounter Him out of habit, of those who have lost their awe of an encounter with Him. That routine turns some people so lukewarm. (…) They have made their vocation an occupation to which nothing more is given, except that which is demanded of one, but without feeling.

Catalina comments: "We the laity have a very important role in our Church. We do not have the right to be silent, because the Lord has sent us out, as all the baptized, to go forth and announce the Good News. We do not have the right to absorb all this knowledge and not share it with others, and to allow our brothers to die of hunger when we have so much bread in our hands!"

PART 7

The Mystical Marriage and our Divinisation In the 'True Life in God'

By Sister *Anne Woods* from Wales, United Kingdom - Sept. 2005 [138)]

Based on the messages of "True Life in God" by Vassula Rydén (1942-2024)

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1. Vassula's writings entitled "True Life in God" (TLIG) speak repeatedly of God offering the world the grace of divinisation. To divinise means to make humans into gods by participation in the divinity of the Godhead.

2. This concept can cause alarm to people unless they realise that it is a term for being gifted with eternal life: it is the eternal life of God and 'in' God that will be given to us. Christ promised it to us. The Gospel of John and the Epistles talk of it a number of times. St Peter's letters allude to it and St Paul's letters to the seven churches as well. This is why Jesus Christ came, that we may share in his divine life, that we may be one with the Father as Christ and the Father are one – and therefore it is a divine union.

3. We are called to be sons and daughters of God. We are called to be the Body of Christ. Jesus Christ is the Head of his Body the Church. The Body is meant to be completely one with its Divine Head. What Jesus Christ is by nature as the Son of God we are called to be by grace – each according to that degree or capacity to which God had in mind for us when He created us. Head and Body divinised with the divine eternal life of God, given to us in Christ Jesus which was won back for us by his redeeming life and death.

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138) In between [brackets] are not from Anne Woods, neither notes 133, 134, 136, 137, 138, and 155. The frequent gaps in de text are not indicated.

4. We are to be holy as our God is holy, not by coercion, but by willingly fulfilling the command of God. (Lev. 19:2, Mt. 5:48) Not out of duty like an abstract action but out of real love for God.

The head is the highest and noblest part of Man

The following reply by Teresa Higginson (1844-1905) to Father Edward Powell of Alexander's Church in Liverpool, was given on Nov. 11, 1880. The Venerable Teresa Higginson is the well-known apostle of the devotion to the Sacred Head of our Lord as the seat of his divine Wisdom (understanding):

«« In honour of the Sacred Head as seat of divine Wisdom and shrine of the powers of the Holy Soul and intellectual faculties and centre of the senses of the body, I write dear Rev. Father in obedience to your wish. (...) The question you asked me was - I think: "Why is it that our dear beloved Lord wished his Sacred Head to be honoured as the 'shrine of the powers of his Holy Soul', while the soul is certainly all over the body and the head is not to be considered the acting seat of all the powers of the soul." And this is what I understand: As the reason or intellect in us is that part of the soul that is nearest to God, it is in a special manner the image of God, nay, is the very light of God in the soul, in which we see God as He is, and ourselves as we are, enabling us to distinguish right from wrong.

And as the head is the seat of the reasoning powers, and the faculties of the mind repose therein, so from the Sacred Head shine forth in a blaze of resplendent light all knowledge, wisdom, understanding and a guiding power to direct and govern the will and affections of the Sacred Heart; and in this is seen the connection of the desired devotion – the ruling powers of the Sacred Heart are seated in the Sacred Head. I will not enter further into detail, for I think what you wish to know is clear.

The soul pervades every part of the body, but as the reasoning powers are the highest faculties of the soul, and as the head is said to contain or be the shrine of these faculties in a special way and the memory is said to exist in the brain, so the reason guides and directs the will and love, or affections, of the human heart. The head is the highest and noblest part of a human, but I do not mean that the soul is divided, no, these three powers though really distinct cannot be separated no more than the Persons of the adorable Trinity be separated - they form together but one soul, which is immortal and perfect in its powers when filled with sanctifying grace as is the Holy Soul of Jesus. And our dear beloved Lord gave me to understand that though He was much offended by the sins committed through the weakness of the will and misled affections, yet the sins of the intellect far exceed those in number and in magnitude. »»

5. Only God is holy. *"You alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord, You alone are the Most High Jesus Christ"*, we sing each Sunday and feast day. To be holy as God is holy, is to be holy with the very holiness of God Himself. The holiness of God descends and God unites Himself to each one so that the very powers of the soul – memory, understanding [or intelligence] and will – are in perfect union with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When this union is total, utter, complete, that signifies divinization, no more, no less.

6. **The full union of the soul and the Trinity is termed 'Mystical Marriage'. Mystical Marriage means that the Holy One, the Triune God, weds the soul to Himself in perfect fusion [and in conformity with each other] while the 'spouse' retains perfect individuality and free will.**

7. The Father in his Divine Power commits and unites Himself to the memory, which as a matter of course reflects the soul's power. The Eternal Son in his Divine Wisdom commits and unites Himself to understanding as a reflection of the soul's power. The Holy Spirit in his Divine Goodness commits and unites Himself to the human will as a reflection of the soul's power. With The Divine presence in the powers of the soul the person thinks, acts, and speaks only as directly informed by God's Power, Wisdom and Goodness. Thus the soul ceases to act outside the influence of the Divine Light. We call this 'Christlikeness'. People who meet a divinised person will describe the encounter in terms of: "It was as though I were speaking with Jesus Himself."

8. **The Father can only inhere Himself in memory if it is being moved by 'pure hope'.**[139] **The Eternal Son can only inhere Himself in understanding if it is being moved by 'pure faith'.**[140] **The Holy Spirit can only inhere Himself in human will if it is being moved by 'pure love'.**[141] Put simply, hope empties the memory, faith empties the understanding and charity empties the will. These three powers of the soul have to be emptied by the theological virtues because these transcend human reason and logic. The purely human way of knowing, through the senses and discursive intellect, must be transcended before one can be disposed to unite with the transcendent God. All means must be proportionate to their end, must manifest a certain accord and likeness to the end. Peas will not cook until they reach the same temperature as the hot water. Logs will not burn until they reach the same temperature as the fire. Nothing, no creature, can use the natural faculty of understanding as a proportionate [and sufficient] means to the attainment of God. Anything that the intellect is able to comprehend and the will experience and the imagination picture is immensely far from and incommensurable to what God is able to do. The void created by the Theological Virtues of faith, hope and charity are **most like God** in the sense that they adapt man's faculties for participation in the transcendent God. They lift a person above himself, transform him, and dispose him to regain the

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139) cf. "The Ascent of Mount Carmel" by St John of the Cross (3:1-15).

140) cf. ibid 3:8-32

141) cf. ibid 3:16-45

'fullness' of the divine image and likeness wherein Adam was originally created and what man shall appropriate again in the metanoia [which is a transfiguration of his being] yet to come.

9. The Catholic Catechism, Nº 1812, states: *"The human virtues are rooted in the theological virtues, which adapt Man's faculties for participation in the divine nature: for the theological Virtues relate directly to God. They dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity; they have the One and Triune God for their ORIGIN, MOTIVE and OBJECT."* The four cardinal virtues of mind and character are infused in us by Holy Baptism along with the three theological virtues. The cardinal virtues are fortitude, temperance, justice and prudence. These seven virtues, when exercised in a heroic manner, are the grounds for both beatification and canonisation. All seven will have come to their full potential in the divinised soul.

10. Fortitude/steadfastness aids in controling the passions of hope, despair, fear, daring/courage, and anger. These arise when difficulties are encountered in gaining good or avoiding evil. Temperance aids in the control of the passions of love, hate, desire, dislike, pleasure and sadness or pain. These are concerned with good and evil when passions arise spontaneously. Justice, on its turn, perfects the will to do good in man's social actions. These three cardinal virtues are governed by the fourth: prudence, and this flows from charity within.

11. At Baptism the [pure] theological and cardinal virtues are infused into our soul by the Holy Trinity. When charity is the motive for all our actions, these virtues are sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. That is, one should be motivated by love of God, and then love of neighbour as God loves him. John 13:34 says: *"Love one another as I have loved you."* The seven gifts are knowledge, understanding, fear of the Lord, wisdom, piety, fortitude and counsel.

12. Sin, every slightest movement of consent in the will contrary to the glory of God, whether or not externally expressed, clouds the transparency of the soul. Each 'cloud' has to be cast out, evaporated, to restore transparency. This is effectuated by the co-operation of our free-will with the virtues. The 'voids' created by the practised virtues are precisely this [enhanced] 'transparency' through which the Divine Light inheres and thereby divinises us. [Ultimately, in God's coming kingdom] such divinisation will be available to all, and [by then] only sincere repentance is required in order to open the floodgates to grace for the journey to begin. In "True Life in God" we find:

«« All souls to which I (God the Father) am joined become brides as well, for in my intimate relationship I have with them, I become their bridegroom each day of their life, and so it will be with you if you will be enamoured of Us. Voluntarily you will thrust yourself in Me and savour the fullness of my Divine Love. From your birth I was eager to possess you and while I was seeing you grow, I was in secret already celebrating our betrothals. I would have flown to you at your first sign of repentance and I would cry out pounding my Royal Sceptre: "Acquitted!" And I would brand your forehead with my fiery baptismal kiss fragrancing all the universe. This would be a foresign of our matrimonial celebration, and I would offer you as a gift of my Love to you a crown made of the most fragrant flowers, each of its petals representing a virtue. Only then would you be able to say: "I see..." and truthfully mean it. »» [142)]

13. Vassula's messages from Jesus, promise that each one will receive [in our end-time generation] a personal theophany,[143)] by means of a descent of the Blessed Trinity, giving a warning concerning our spiritual condition and concurrently provides the grace of repentance. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit will be perceived by a grace of enlightenment so that one's soul will behold what THEY [the Triune God] once saw when she was created during a point in time...

You will behold:
He who held you first in his Hands.
The Eyes that saw you first.

You will behold:
The Hands of He who shaped you,
And blessed you ...

You will behold:
The Most Tender Father, your Creator.
All clothed in fearful splendour.
The First and the Last,
He who is, who was, and is to come.
The Almighty,
The Alpha and the Omega,
The Ruler. [144)]

142) "Odes of the Holy Trinity" (p. 49).
143) A theophany is a vision of God whether symbolic or intellectual, or in the spirit. [In this case the theophany is also called "The Warning" or "Illumination of Conscious", prophecised for the first time during the Garrabandal apparitions of the 1960s.]

14. That is, we glimpse the Father. Then we will perceive with the mind's eye the Light of the Holy Spirit piercing us from the penetrating gaze of Christ who is also before us. Our soul will become aware of all the events of our lifetime, for our eyes will be transfixed by the eyes of Christ which will be like two Flames of Fire.[145)] Our heart will look back on all our sins.[146)] We will see all the truth concerning our spiritual state before God exactly as He sees us.[147)] Normally this is the vision given to someone at the moment of death when his soul is engulfed by Divine Truth, seeing the deeper spiritual reality of [the committed] evil and, consequently, undergoes the just judgment.

15. With this truth-experience, the full grace of complete and sincere repentance is offered, [as also happened to the Apostle Peter cf. Luke 22:61-62: "*And the Lord looked at Peter (…) and he went out and wept bitterly.*"] Because all our sins are then revealed [in their true measure] – including those overlooked, for we have become habituated to them and lost the sense of sin concerning them – an act of pure contrition will result [to be followed by a confessional hearing by a priest]. The Catholic Church teaches that an act of pure contrition renders a person ready for instant entrance to Heaven, like happened with the 'good thief' on Calvary. This is because the revelation itself is sanctifying, being that it is the direct fruit of cooperation with the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Sanctification, the Holy Spirit. Hence it is that our contrition that results from this theophany renders the soul in need of sacramental confession[148)] and receptive to the fullness of sanctity which, when fully cultivated, will lead to [a condition that in God's time allows] divinisation. Without the cleansing of **all our sins,** divinisation cannot be, for if only a few specks of sin remain, the impurity [of the soul] remains and stands in the way of our deification.

16. The opportunity for sanctification given by Jesus during the theophany is in its effect the garland of virtue as promised (in the TLIG). The illumination has to be sustained and developed by a life of wholly living the Gospel in [unceasing longing] for metanoia [149)] It is by theosis, that is, a turning to God totally – being

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144) Vassula Ryden: The Purification, Sept. 15, 1991 - http://www.tlig.org/en/messages/655

145) The flames of Christ's eyes are the Holy Spirit cf. Dan. 10:6 and Rev. 1:14, 5:6.

146) See the same TLIG message of Sept. 15, 1991 for more details on the pentecostal experience.

147) MDM 12-07-2012: "Many will feel a fire burning through their bodies as if the heat of the sun is overpowering them. Inside they will feel a burning heat, until the sense of realisation enables them to witness the spectacle of their souls. (…) Many will weep bitter tears of remorse and sadness and will endure the pain of humiliation because of their sins."

148) See message of MDM of July 9th, 2012 concerning non-Catholics. They need a special prayer.

consciously the 'humanity' for the Word on earth. The sanctification of the soul, as a pure gift, vanishes with sin, but the infusion of the virtues that go together with the grace of true contrition, **enables withdrawal from the urge to commit mortal sin and even unintentional venal sins**. Sin will then be eliminated from the person's life by simple choice, [once liberated from the ancestral bills, also called the chain burden of our past, but not yet for the time being]!

17. The primary means of sustaining the sanctifying grace, leading into divinisation of the soul, is the Most Holy Eucharist that seeks to release its divinity integrally. This releasing will be facilitated through the perfect alignment of our will to God's Will. If not perfect [and it is in this dispensation never perfect], daily Holy Communion cannot fully release its inherent divinity to the soul but only the lights and graces that help us towards [an ever greater] conformity and unity of will with God.

18. As mentioned, only the Divine Light of the Holy Spirit, revealing all our sins, enables this gift of sanctification, that is, as long as we fully accept the grace of repentance. There exists no 'vacuum' in the human soul. When the will turns completely to God it is instantly filled with God, since it is the Holy Spirit's response which brings about such a turning in the deed of accepting his grace. Then, instantly, Christ overwhelms the soul. Christ, in taking up his possession of souls in the state of pure contrition, resides in them as He promised (John 14:23), just so long as the person sustains this possession by practised virtue in Mystical Marriage. This is going to happen at the Second Coming [and heralds] the Reign of Christ on earth: He will reign in his divinity in each soul and governs and directs its thoughts, words and deeds in goodness and virtue. The Second Pentecost [prepares the way of] Christ's return [only shortly before it is due to happen]. In Revelation 20:6, concerning the Millennium Reign, the number 1000 is mentioned as a symbol of divine eternity, [but this number is also to be taken in the literal sense]. The number implies that Christ will reign in his Divinity. He will do this by reigning in the souls of men.[150)]

149) Metanoia encompasses a repudiation of the old ways and a total spiritual change of being.

150) The Thousand Year Reign, or the Millennium, signifies not only a spiritual reign in the souls of men, but also a literal reign on earth. Message from MDM, Febr. 23 and 24 2012: "My daughter, it is important that those who follow the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church accept the Millennium, as promised to all of my children. The Words contained in my Holy Book, the Holy Bible, do not lie. My promise is contained in the Acts of the Apostles. John the Evangelist was also told about the Glorious Return of my beloved Son, when He will reign in the new Era of Peace for 1,000 years. (...) You, children of this generation, will be given the gift of living in the Paradise, even more beautiful than that prepared for Adam and Eve. There will be no death, no illness, no sin, in the New Paradise. This Paradise will offer 1,000 years of peace, love and harmony. Age will be non-existent as Man will live in peace with families of (a number of) generations." See also message of MDM of Oct. 30, 2013 concerning the Mystical Marriage.

19. The theophany prophesied in the TLIG message of 15th Sept. 1991 takes only moments in itself, for it takes a single flash of the Divine Light to reveal everything to us, [but the ensuing conversation takes longer]. The effects last hours, days or weeks and, in some cases, lead to months of mourning, with pure contrition, over acknowledged sins. Some persons, having received this grace, have spoken of mourning over Christ, whose pain at their sins is felt by them at the moment of their enlightenment. Others speak of a quiet flowing movement of grace lasting many weeks, that gradually brought the sins of their life before them, and with less pain.

20. The contrition evoked by a pentecostal experience remains in the soul as a deep abiding sense of sorrow. It is this which galvanizes the soul with a very fixed and determined resolution not to sin again. When a sin entices, this agony of regret exerts on the soul a quiet, gentle magnetism that turns against sinning. Thus we are aware of being graced into sinlessness, if the Illumination was accepted [although the urge to sin remains in the flesh]. The first month or more of resisting sin is the hardest because we have to erase the 'habit' of sin, but we have this inner help; we find it is true that with God all things are possible – leopards can change their spots, lions can lay down with lambs, the babe can put its hand in the vipers' den unharmed. All these refer to realities [to be fully actualized in our transfigurated and incorruptable body as from the the establishment of the Millennium Reign].

21. How do we know that a theophany, an illumination of the Holy Spirit when meeting the Father and the Son, can effect a conversion causing a person to change so drastically that he soars into sanctity and [makes great strides towards] divinisation in just a very short period of time? How can a theophany give a person so swiftly a sanctity that takes a lifetime for others [that for many only lies within reach beyond the threshold of death]? Two answers. The first is obvious: Vassula tells that the Holy Spirit will resurrect us from our spiritual body, which lies wormy with corruption in a desert of sin, and in that resurrection, called metanoia, confers the Spiritual Nuptials of divinisation upon us.[151)] The second answer is that we know of this because these types of conversion

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151) Divinisation can never be complete, in the sense of being reborn, as long as we are bound to this earthly vessel. Only when we have a transfigurated body that can walk through walls as Christ did and yet He could eat, we will have reached the condition that committing sin has been eliminated, which is the essence of divinisation. Moses saw God each day from face to FACE and had to cover his face to hide its splendour when he went outside to meet the crowd. Yet even Moses could sin; he was denied access to the Promised Land because he let his anger run wild. That was not inspired by God, contrary to what people thought. (Num. 20:12)

are found in the testimonies of scores of hagiographies. The rapid flight from sin into holiness is seen especially in those saints who lived very short lives. **These lives are meant to reveal the possibility that by means of God's power this transformation can be effectuated – for anyone and at any age**. Some are tempted to despair because of their sum of years. But God can do it! Then they too will witness to the truth of the central message of The True Life in God.

22. In itself is the pentecostal grace not new. [We not only speak of the Illumination of Conscious, but also in the short run-up to Christ's return.] It is to be considered unique because of the universality of these events. However, [this road to] divinisation is not new. The earliest Christian writers wrote of it and the Orthodox Church has retained the use of the word, as well as the spirituality of repentance and divinisation, holiness, deep remorse [and active prayer life]. In the Catholic Church the name 'Mystical Marriage' has been given for the state of divinisation, hence we are more familiar with that terminology here in the West.

23. Christ has reigned in his divinity in myriads of souls on earth since Christianity began. In the early Church the name 'eternal life', as used in the Gospels and Epistles, refers to the core reality of receiving God's own eternal life, which makes us partakers of the divine nature. (2 Peter 1:4) The reason for the uniqueness of the event, known as the pentecostal theophany, lies not in its mode but in its universality, [for it will touch all people on earth]. That which has been received in the past by the few will be received by [all, in preparation and as a foretaste of the Millennium Reign in which we will also have a new body, indispensible element of the divinisation]. Only in the Blessed Virgin Mary, while standing at the foot of the Cross during Christ's agony, was the whole Church sinless, without spec or wrinkle, and utterly pure in faith.[152)]

24. Sinlessness is the direct fruit of the full co-operation with the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work. Divinisation in the Mystical Marriage, means that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit possess the three powers of the soul, as we saw earlier. If the human will allows God to inhere it fully, the person wills only what God wills, and sin will accordingly be eliminated. The 'New Eden' Jesus speaks of to Vassula, is present within the [recreated] Garden of Eden: sinlessness as in the pristine dawn of creation. It resides in the souls of men. It is **within** the

152) The Most Holy Mother had a body undefiled by the original sin and so she could be in a position to never sin. Central doctrine: her body was differently conceived than ours.

person who receives the pentecostal gifts, repents and lives in 'Christlikeness'. In a word, the person will become another Jesus by grace and be as Jesus was by nature – [bound to happen when Heaven and Earth merge as one. By then everyone will live in harmony, joy and love, being freed from the old bondage to the flesh. Romans 8:7 says: ***"The flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot."***] Adam in Eden is called by St Luke (3:38): ***"the Son of God"***. Speaking of the Old-Testament-Law, St Paul writes to the Galatians (3:25-26): *"Now that the time has come we are no longer under that guardian, and you are, all of you,* ***sons of God*** *through faith in Christ Jesus."*

25. In our context faith does not refer to that we believe there is a God, but that we put all our trust in God. Many believe there is a God but few actually put their trust in Him. Putting our trust in Him means we really believe all He has promised to do for us, communally and individually. Thus we will act in total abandonment to the Will of God with unquestioning gratitude. We truly believe that whatever good or evil befalls us, that it is disposed by our loving Father for our and others' spiritual good. This is sacrificial faith in God. Ezekiel's theophany (1:4), where he saw a glowing bronze at the heart of the cloud, prefigures the body of Christ glowing in the furnace of suffering. (Rev. 1:15) [In this, our time], in the deification process we live through the Cross: pain is its essence and so we become glowing bronze in the midst of the Cloud of Divinity.

26. To prepare for the Mystical Marriage, Vassula advocates theosis: 'Us, we'. Consciously we do everything together with Jesus by inviting Him to do every human activity ín us, with us and through us. This effectuates unceasing prayer and the elimination of sin [for as long as this closeness persists]. We pursue sinlessness by always seeking Jesus' presence – in our environment of home, work or leisure, which, here and now, will bring on many forms of suffering.

27. Divinisation in the Mystical Marriage is impossible without total knowledge of and deep repentance about all that is sin within us, even though we are living an apparently good life. Recognition of hidden sinfulness – in the deeper levels of the attachment of our will to unacknowledged sins – is only possible by an infusion of Divine Light. Even now, [in our ordinary life], the revelation of our sins is often due to the unnoticed presence of the Holy Spirit shining in us: we can only see what needs cleaning when light shines on it. Such grace of the Holy Spirit for our [ever-renewing] conversion is **during this life** indispensable, as the lives of the saints demonstrate. Because the promised theophany

reveals **all** sins, the accompanying pain may be too excruciating. We must prepare for this with sanctified lives through the exercise of theosis, of the 'us, we'.

28. St Clare of Assisi undertook a life of austere penance because, as she told in the "Testament": *"The Most High enlightened my heart, to do penance."* On her deathbed she could only speak to the sisters of the sublimes truths concerning the Holy Trinity in her soul.

29. Being enlightened, St Francis of Assisi set out on a life of poverty in following the Gospel, yet he too needed the Holy Spirit to reveal deeper truths about himself. *"Who are You and what am I?",* he prayed. When Brother Leo asked what he meant by this prayer, Francis replied: *"Two lights were shown to my soul: one of the knowledge of myself. (…) I witnessed the grievous depths of my own vileness and misery."* [153)]

30. Sister Faustina writes in her Diary: [154)] *"Today the Lord's gaze shot through me like lightning. At once I came to know the tiniest specs in my soul, and knowing the depths of my misery I fell to my knees and begged the Lord's pardon, and with great trust I immersed myself in his Infinite Mercy."*

31. St Catherine of Genoa *"experienced such a sudden and overwhelming love for God and so penetrating an experience of contrition for her sins, that she almost collapsed. In her heart she said: 'No more world for me! No more sin!' She remained at home in seclusion for several days, absorbed in a profound awareness of her own wretchedness and of God's Mercy."* [155)]

32. Gertrude the Great wrote:

> «« After the infusion of Thy most sweet light, I saw many thing in my heart which offended thy purity, and I even perceived that all within me was in such disorder and confusion that **Thou couldst not abide therein**. (…) When I reflect on the kind of life I led formerly, and which I have led since, I protest in truth that it was a pure effect of Thy grace, which Thou hast given me without any merit of mine. Thou didst give me from henceforward a more clear knowledge of Thyself, which was such that the sweetness of Thy love led me to correct my faults far more that the fear of the punishments with which Thy just anger threatened me. »»

153) Fioretti 3rd Cons. Stigmata
154) No 852
155) "Classics of Western Spirituality" - Catherina van Genoa.

This grace was followed by Gertrude perceiving the Trinity within herself.[156] Of Bridget of Sweden we read: *"When her husband died, she underwent the profound conversion of her being that made her the bride of Christ."* [157]

33. All these saints, who were given the pentecostal experience, were faithful to the renunciation of sin and to the [heroic] practise of virtue. Thus, everyone of them quickly arrived at [a close simile] of Divinisation. The [initial] grace may be bestowed, but only develops with [an unceasing] exercise of faith, hope and charity. The pentecostal experience does not arise thanks to a 'magic wand' that immediately sanctifies the soul, but grants that very intense self-knowledge and deep contrition with which the swift flight commences [toward ever greater perfection] in the bond of Mystical Marriage. [158]

34. We have a rich historical treasure of Fathers and Doctors of the Church who have written about Divinisation and Mystical Marriage. So we shall look at a few of these and start with a question. When a person is being divinised, do they experience it consciously? Yes. This is the difference between divine life given at Baptism and the one given at Mystical Marriage. Père Augustin Poulain S J writes in his voluminous work "The Graces of Interior Prayer": [159]

> «« Baptism and sanctifying grace already give us this participation in the divine nature, but it is **an unconscious state**. It is differently in the Mystical Marriage. We are then **conscious** of the communication of the divine life. God is no longer merely the object of the supernatural operations of the mind and will, as in the preceding degree. He shows Himself as being **the joint cause of these operations**. He is the **aid** that produces in us that effect. Our acts appear as being, after a certain fashion, divine [though we might not recognize it as such]. Our faculties are the branches in which we witness the circulation of the divine sap. We have God within us, who lives for us as well as we live for Him. We live in Him, by Him, and **through** Him.
>
> No creature can manifest himself to us in this manner. In Heaven the mechanism of grace will appear in all its clearness; we shall thus see unveiled the 'marriage' of two operations, the divine and the human, and

156) "The Revelations" by St Gertrude (2:2-3).

157) "Classics of Western Spirituality" - Birgitta of Sweden (p. 2).

158) The author notices that those who fast on bread and water each week make this rapid progress in the spiritual life, but she says not understand why. [Perhaps through such fasting, the human spirit learns to escape the tyranny of the flesh. Anyhow, only in a body reduced by sickness and pain, like with Luisa Piccarreta, Marthe Robin, Lidwina of Schiedam and Anne Catherine Emmerich, a persistent sinlessness by means of God's grace comes nearer.]

159) "Des Grâces d'oraison", (Paris 1901) by Père Augustin Poulain S.J. (Engl. Ed. 19:13 - p. 288).

even the predominance of the former, our 'divinisation', that is to say. The fourth and last degree of prayer is the anticipation, the **more or less marked** foretaste of this experiential knowledge. In the lower degrees the transformation has begun, but we know it only by faith. »»

35. Alphonsus-Maria Liguori sums it up by saying: *"In the spiritual marriage, the soul is transformed into God and becomes **one** with Him, comparable to a glass of water that becomes one with the sea after being poured into it."* [160)]

36. Teresa of Avila wrote in "The Interior Castle": [161)] *"Besides, this company it enjoys gives it **far greater strength** than ever before. If, as David says, 'With the Holy One thou shalt be holy', doubtless by its **becoming one** with the Almighty, by the union of spirit with the Spirit, the soul must gathers the strength – as we know the saints did – to suffer and to die..."*

37. Père Augustin Poulain S J makes an important remark: [162)]

«« Whatever opinion may be adopted, this, at least, is the case, that it **seems** to the soul that it can no longer sin, when it ecstatically experiences to be participating in God's life. This does not prevent it seeing very clearly that in itself it is still capable of all kinds of sin. **It sees the abyss into which it may fall**, and the powerful Hand that sustains it. »»

38. Père Poulain quotes John of the Cross in "The Ascent of Mount Carmel" : [163)]

«« The soul then by resigning itself (...) becomes immediately enlightened by, and **transformed** in, God; because He communicates his own supernatural **Being** in such a way that the soul **seems to be God himself** and to possess the things of God. Such a union is then wrought when God bestows on the soul that supreme grace which makes the things of God and the soul **one** by the transformation that renders the one the partaker of the other. The soul seems **to be God rather than itself**, and indeed is God by participation, though in reality preserving its own natural substance as distinct from God as it did before, although transformed in Him, as the window preserves its own substance distinct from that of the rays of the sun shining through it and making it light. »»

39. And again, John of the Cross writes, now in "The Spiritual Canticle" : [164)]

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160) Poulain ibid (19:14)
161) Poulain ibid, "Seventh House" (2:13)
162) Poulain ibid (p. 291)
163) Poulain ibid (2:5)
164) "The Spiritual Canticle" (Stanza XXII: line 1)

«« This – the spiritual marriage – is, beyond all comparison, a far higher state than that of **espousals**, because it is a complete **transformation** into the Beloved; and because each of them **surrenders** to the other the entire possession of themselves in the perfect union of love, wherein the soul becomes Divine, and, by participation, God, **insofar possible in this life**. I believe that no soul can ever attains to this state **without being confirmed by grace in it**, for the faith of both is confirmed: that of God being confirmed in the soul. »»

40. Père Poulain also quotes John of the Cross regarding the soul's breathing of God through inspiration by Himself, excuding the inner life of the Trinity. It is too long a quote, but its effects can be quoted here: [165)]

«« If we recognize that God has done it such great favor by uniting it with the Most Holy Trinity, making **it equal to God through participation**, is it not perplexing that it should use **the faculties of its intellect** to accomplish its **acts of knowledge and love**, or, to put it more accurately, that together with the Most Holy Trinity it **accomplishes everything** exactly as the Most Holy Trinity would do itself? »»

41. The Venerable Anne Madeleine de Remuzat recorded the following, seven years before her death, and by then she was only 26 years old: [166)]

«« I found myself all at once in the presence of the Three adorable Persons of the Trinity. (…) I understood that our Lord wished to give me an infinitely purer knowledge of his Father and of Himself than all that I had known until that day. (…) How admirable were the secrets I was allowed to learn in and through his adorable bosom! (…) My God, Thou hast willed to **divinise my soul**, so to say, by **transforming it into Thyself**, after having destroyed its individual form. »»

42. In his "Life of Mother Veronica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus", foundress of the "Victim-Sisters of the Sacred Heart", the Canadian Père Eugène Prévost (1860-1946) writes: *"The most perfect form of her union was a sort of co-penetration of her whole self with the Divinity, so that she felt God himself to think, speak and act in her, to become the cause of all her movements."* [167)]

43. We can see clearly that **theosis prepares us for Mystical Marriage**. Theosis means consciously asking Jesus to do every act within us and through us, and

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165) "The Spiritual Canticle" (Stanza XXXIX: line 1)

166) Poulain ibid (p. 296)

167) Poulain ibid (p. 298); This title is not in the list of 100 titles of Prévot's congregation.

so we never say: “I will go to the shops”, “I’ll drive you home”, “I will go and cook the dinner now”, without adding interiorly: “Jesus we will go… will drive… cook the dinner…” We have discussed the effects earlier on.

44. In our own era, Blessed Sister Dina Bélanger, who died aged 33 in 1929, experienced what she called the divine substitution of Jesus for her being. She explains it was as though Jesus alone thought, acted and spoke in her at all times. Moreover, she was aware of part of herself being in Heaven and participating in all the goods and graces of the Most Holy Trinity for their dispersion by prayer. Her whole life exemplifies with details the meaning of the Mystical Marriage and divinisation together with the ever deepening union in the Trinity who unfolded continuous new wonders that were utterly spiritual. As with all those who are on the way of divinisation, she hungered to sustain and increase her love and fidelity in and with God. She did this through the Holy Eucharist. In her autobiography she writes: [168)]

> «« My body continues to live on this dismal, distant earth, that I no longer inhabit; it continues to operate through the action and the will of Jesus. My soul, quiescent, consumed, has been absorbed by the Eternal, in Heaven. (…) Through our Lord, substituted for my being annihilated in Him, I have at my disposal the riches of the Infinite. Not only on my own behalf, but in the name of all responsible creatures I must return love for Love, and offer up infinite Love in response to the eternal Love of the divine Trinity. (…) In a soul taken up into Jesus, Holy Communion is the outpouring of the Infinite into the finite.[169)] It is the satisfaction of sovereign Perfection in supreme Beauty, it is the gift of the Eternal to the Uncreated; it is the embrace of God the Father and his Word, issuing in the Spirit of Love, a surge of Love passing among the three adorable Persons, an outburst of tenderness from the Heart of indivisible Unity. (…) If only we knew the extent to which understanding in the light of eternity differs from understanding in temporal obscurity! If only souls realized what Treasure is theirs in the divine Eucharist, tabernacles would have to be protected by unassailable ramparts; for, under the influence of a holy and all-consuming hunger, they would go by themselves to feed on the Manna of the seraphim; night and day, churches would be overflowing with worshippers consumed with love for the august Prisoner. »»

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168) “Autobiography of Dina Bélanger” (pp. 230-31).

169) Based on the original French text it is “the Infinite into the finite” and not “the Infinite into the Infinite”, as was translated by Sr Anne Woods.

45. The autobiography of Dina Bélanger contains accounts of the Divine Light that revealed the depths of her sinfulness, highly detailed descriptions of her Divine Substitution by Jesus and her interior visions of being in the Most Holy Trinity. She can be called one of the forerunners that exemplify the teachings on the Mystical Marriage and divinisation that is being offered to this entire and presently living generation. It will take the direct intervention of God in a personal theophany to each and every individual. The option of the vernacular liturgy and greater access to the Word of God in the West after Vaticanum II helped people recognize that everyone in the Church is called to personal holiness. We were being prepared for *"this era of new and divine holiness"*, as Pope John Paul the Great expressed it.[170)]

46. When God raises up prophets to tell us of the desires of his heart, He also sends forerunners or exemplars of his message: nothing ever comes out of the blue, nor has it ever been unknown before. Vassula Ryden does not teach a new message concerning repentance/divinisation and Mystical Marriage. The Church triomphant is bridal, spousal, unblemished, divinized: this claim can be established with reference to centuries of teachings from the Fathers, Doctors and Saints of the Church. These teachings can be shown to blossom forth from and be upheld by the Holy Scriptures themselves. As we see, it has been there all along, but despite two thousand years of Christianity, **the vision has never before been articulated by the Church that without exception all the baptized are [offered the opportunity] to participate in the fullness of holiness**. At the point when the apostasy of naturalism and rationalism seems to have gained an unshakable grip on the Church, when in that Church a pseudo-church of spiritual corpses has emerged, God opens the door of the sepulchre of our world, [shouting loudly: "Lázarus!"]. The Holy Spirit is going to make the Church rise in repentance and holiness. It will occurr in a time when all seems lost, for that is how God works, as exemplified by Holy Scripture, that we might believe and give thanks.

Come Holy Spirit, come by means of the powerful intercession

of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, your well-beloved Bride.

The Spirit and the Bride say: 'Come'!

AMEN …come Lord Jesus !

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170) "L'Osservatore Romano" (9:7:97).

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• Recommended in this respect is the study and contemplation of the life of Saint Veronic Giuliani (1660-1727), whose life is the supreme example of the Mystical Marriage.

Who was Vassula Ryden?

Vassula Ryden, was Greek, born in Egypt and belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church. Her husband's professional obligations meant that she had to live most of her life in third world countries. God would reveal Himself to her on the 28th of Nov. 1985, while living with her family in Bangladesh. Many revelations would follow. It is God that dictates, inspires and reveals to her his words of Wisdom to pass them on to his people so that they know his Will. Vassula had never received catechetical instruction or theological formation.

As said, in 1985 Vassula received her first vision. It was of her guardian angel Daniel. Later, after purification and spiritual growth, she was called by God to serve Him by communicating his divine words to all people. Vassula received these inspirations in the form of locutions and through inner visions. God asked her to call these prophetic messages "The True Life in God". The True Life in God is a call to all for more repentance, reconciliation, peace, love and is above all a call for unity of the Christian Churches in reverent respect of the Holy Mass celebration.

Since 1988 Vassula had been invited to speak in more than 85 countries and in 2017 had given over 1500 presentations. Vassula never received personal royalties, fees, or benefits for her efforts. The Lord said to her: *"I have given you for free, so do you also give it for free."*

APPENDIX 22

Is Cremation Christian?

A common question regarding funeral rites asked today is whether it is legal for Christians to be cremated instead of buried, especially when the former practice is cheaper. But we will first turn the question around: "Is cremation, literally corpse burning, not to be considered a serious lack of respect toward God in view of the uplifted function of the body which, after all, serves as a temple of the Holy Ghost?" Blaise Pascal wrote: *"We should not look at the bodily remains as a ghastly carrion, because that's the deceptiveness of nature, but as an inviolable and eternal temple of the Holy Ghost."* (letter to his sister Gilberte after their father had died). The hypostatic union of body and soul, redeemed and glorified in Christ, is designed to attain beatitude both in body and soul; through it man is to bring the whole of creation back to God. The body is a 'place' and like any place is associated with past events. It is not a question of reverence 'of' but of reference 'by' the body. We should therefore allow the bodily remains to gradually turn to ashes by the natural process of decomposition. This also provides God with the opportunity to benevolently conserve a body in splendour as a witness to the saintly life it once carried. In a Dutch information brochure I found the following description in which bacteriological decomposition process is compared with the practice of cremation:

> «« It is revolting, in a certain sense cruel and awful, to destructively attack the composition of the remains a few hours after death of that one person we loved. The thought of the convulsions of the corpse within the oven, the sizzling of the burning muscles and intestines, the bursting of the head and other body parts (…) goes much more against the feelings than imagining the natural course of things. »»

Formerly cremation was forbidden by the Roman Catholic Church except in cases of public necessity. At no time in Church history was the practice of cremation ever adopted or preferred in the Catholic Church. From the very beginning, burial of the dead was an inviolable practice in the Church, and she constantly fought against cremation, a pagan practice often accompanied by rites incompatible with the Christian religion. Under Boniface VIII, anyone who practiced cremation was excommunicated, and people refused to give the remains of the body an Ecclesiastical burial. With the advent of the French Revolution in 1789, an attempt was made on Nov. 11, 1796 to introduce cremation, without success. It was only as a result of the pressure and influence by the Masonic gang that in the last quarter of the 19th century the idea of cremation became a serious topic of discussion and that some Western countries authorized it.

On May 19, 1886, the Holy See issued a decree: the Church banned membership in cremation societies that were largely of Masonic origin and spirit, and it was forbidden to request cremation of one's own body or that of someone else. On December 15, 1886, Pope Leo XIII confirmed that Catholics who offered their bodies for cremation were deprived of a proper Ecclesiastical burial. Only in the case of an epidemic involving public health was cremation permitted. The new Canon Law of 1983 (1176.3) substantially liberalized this requirement, stating that cremation is not forbidden, unless chosen for reasons contrary to Christian teaching. The deliberate consumption by fire, except in case of necessity, reminds God of the abominable initiation rites. (Gen. 2:6, Mal. 3:6) Accordingly, good arguments need to be advanced in favor of the practice. Unfortunately, the statement of Canon 1176.3 invited many faithful to deal with it frivolously, while neglecting the introductory phrase: *"The Church strongly recommends that the pious practice of burying the bodies of the dead be continued."* It would have been more prudent if the rule had been formulated a little differently, more in terms such as: "yet burning/partial cremation is exceptionally permitted, provided that it is not contrary to Christian teaching and provided a clear necessity is demonstrated, in which case it should be aimed at preserving the integrity of the skeleton after which a traditional burial should follow."

To exercise caution in dealing with burning/partial cremation accords with a Scriptural approach. For instance, we read in Leviticus that one who has committed incest should be put to death and burned, which as a matter of course was not to be followed by burial. (Lev. 20:14) In 1 Kings 13:2 cremation is done as punishment. In Old Testament Israel there is occasional mention of burning, as in the case of Achan and his family (Jos. 7:25), but then the bones were spared, whereas in cremation (under a much higher temperature) the bones are also turned to ashes and what remains of them (very brittle material) is pulverized in a mixer. In Numbers 24:8, the pulverization of human bones is considered a very bad thing, as in Micah 3:1-4. Being reduced to ashes by cremation amounts to the same thing. But even burning was avoided. The burning of Saul was exceptional, which was due to the terrible mutilations inflicted on his corpse. Although burned, his bones were spared and ceremonially buried. (1 Sam. 31:11-13)

The faithful are buried in expectation of the resurrection of the dead. This view is reaffirmed to the family of the deceased by the token of a solemn act of burial. See also the most important chapter of 1 Corinthians 15.

According to the prophetic testimony of American Ken Peters (Youtube: "I saw the tribulation"), immediately after the resurrection of the dead, the Antichrist will appear on the scene. It will be with great violence a literal rising from the grave punching holes in the ground. Of course, only at the end of the reign of the Antichrist will be the rapture of the living. It makes sense that the cremated do not participate in that resurrection. Of course, God can also resurrect the ashes. But God does not let Himself be trifled with. If someone is unintentionally reduced to ashes by a forest fire, for example, that person could still participate in the rapture, but if someone had the audacity to be cremated, wouldn't God benevolently dispose of that?! The following verses refer to this:

> «« We who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And

> the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. »» (1 Thes. 4:15-17)

The rapture is related to God's judgment through cataclysmic events and is a Biblical theme. The people of Israel were taken up from the depths of the Red Sea to the other side. Noah and his near family on the water, Lot and his close relatives on the mountain; the two coming raptures will be on the clouds. Even Elijah's stay with the widow of Sarepta could be called a rapture. (1 Kings ch. 17-18) Enoch and Elijah were taken up at the end of their earthly lives and have been waiting ever since in an unknown place to return when going to teach the Antichrist a lesson. Finally, they too will die a human death, but not for good, for says Revelation 11:11-12:

> «« Now, after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them: *"Come up here."* And they ascended to heaven. »»

Fire brings less edifying thoughts to mind. Is not it written that the wicked will be cast into the furnace of fire, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth? (Mt. 13:41-42) Burning shows less respect for the remains than burying them, otherwise the Nazis would never have thrown the Jewish corpses into the furnaces of fire. The Nazis face the punishment inflicted on Moab for their rashness in reducing to ashes the bones of the king of Edom. (Amos 2:1-3) And it was with the ashes of human bones that the pious King Josiah desecrated the pagan altars and made them unfit for further use. (2 Kings 23:16, 20) How is it possible that in our Christian practice we have come to see cremation as a neutral act or even one pleasing to God?

Lastly, a brief anecdote. A few years ago, an elderly couple from Friesland committed suicide. They did not want to become indigent under any circumstances, so they wanted to die. The wife said: *"It's time for the oven."* Words with a sour undertone. They first threw some party, then they mixed some pills in a yogurt and ate it in front of their relatives. They waved one more time and a moment later they were dead. Thereupon they were put in the oven to be cremated… ¶

¶ Het Laatste Nieuws, Febr. 4, 2014: "Fries bejaard stel stapt dansend uit het leven" (Frisian elderly couple steps out of life dancing).

APPENDIX 23

What about Reincarnation?

The most important idea behind the reincarnation theory is that man can climb higher and higher on his journey to perfection by the repetition of life. However, Hebrews 9:27 says: *"It is appointed for humans to die once and after this judgement."* The narrow interpretation of the term leaves open the possibility that for some, those of the pre-creation, who are thus not 'humans' in the exalted sense of the word, that this is for them not their first entrance into the above-earthly. However, that denies one of the major points of faith, articulated in Acts 4:10, 12: *"Salvation is in none other than in Jesus Christ of Nazaoreth."* Since there is no other path to salvation, it must be concluded that man is not only by nature always inclined to do evil (Gal. 5:19-21), but also morally. (A moral judgement involves the conscience as well as the intention of the act.) That is why it is written: *"Repent of your detestable conduct and beg the Lord that He will forgive your evil thoughts."* (Acts 8:22) It is only in this existence, by sanctifying grace – that God withholds from no one – that someone can hold a morally 'good' judgment, if he allows himself to be moved by that grace. Augustine said that *"people do absolutely nothing good without grace, whether by thought, will, love or deed."* (Correpт. et Grat. 2) See also Thomas Aquinas' "Treatise on Grace" (Prima Secundae Quest. 109-114), which distinguishes between the natural grace given to man and the grace added to nature, which is called 'the light of glory'. The latter is necessary for doing things of a higher order that are both commendable and instrinsically good. Thus it is that a soul's condition in Hell is irrevocable, since it is deprived of God's sanctifying grace.

Scripture identifies several ingredients on the path to salvation: salvation by mercy and grace (Tit. 3:5-7); being justified and saved by faith in Jesus Christ and by baptism (Mrk 16:16, Rom. 5:1, 1 Pet. 3:21); the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:15), redemption by Christ's blood (1 Pet. 1:18-19); justification by works (James 2:24). The crux in our argument is that the human condition is totally depraved according to the saying of James 4:14: *"What is the life of a man? A smoke that appears for a moment and then disappears again."* See also Psalm 14:1- 4, 53:4, Luke 18:19 and Romans 3:10.

The matter is that each person must make a choice whether to belong to Christ or Satan. The initiator of that choice is not God. The world is a place of temptations, from ourselves and from environmental factors, but the final choice is ours. One reaches Hell through self-damnation, an eternal running away from God. Finally, once creation is cleansed in the restoration of all things, no one will choose wrongly, for then every creature will be reborn in God. The question, which may be asked, is to what extent this implies the abolition of free will, a question that cannot readily be answered.

"The restoration of all things" (apokatastasis panton, or: restitutionis omnium quae locutus est), spoken of in Acts 3:21, led Origenes to draw hope for a finality to eternal damnation, by human standards infinitely distant but finite nonetheless, a view condemned by Augustine and later by the Second Synod of Constantinople of 543 (a local event). It was then confirmed at the Fifth General Council in 553 which was in fact

the final stage of a fierce conflict initiated by Emperor Justinian ten years earlier. That the original text of the council was lost should not be a reason to question the tradition.

Remarkably, the Bible remains rather silent on the question of reincarnation. However, Isaiah 26:19 clearly states (Septuagint): *"Those in the tombs shall arise",* and Ecclesiastes 12:7: *"The dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it."* This makes a strong case against reincarnation. I wonder what the interpretation of these verses were from the point of view of the Sadducees, who lived in Jesus' time. They belonged to a sect that did not believe in the resurrection of souls. Jesus could easily have pointed at these verses in the dispute He had with them. In stead He came up with an original answer. Jesus said: *"Even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord: 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob'. For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him."* (Luke 20:37)

I would further like to point out, that to have a 'déjà vu' of a former life does not prove reincarnation, because this is within the very nature of transpersonal memories, which as a matter of fact also exist amongst the living. Transpersonal means that I have access to the memory or actual experience of someone else. The Australian Aboriginals seem to be good at it. The most plausible explanation for this phenomenon is that no memory is involved at all, but that it results from demonic inspiration.

Biblical expressions like Malachi 4:5: *"I will send you Elijah the prophet",* with whom John the Baptist is identified (cf. Mat. 11:14), cannot be taken as substantiating the doctrine of reincarnation. Here, the identification means that John the Baptist acted in the image and force of Elijah. Indeed, Elijah will return, not in reincarnated form but in his own body (he never died), together with Henoch (neither he died). They are portrayed as the two witnesses in the Book of Revelation, and after accomplished task, they too will die. (Rev. 11:3-8)

I quote the Nishmat Hayyim (On the Nature of the Soul) by the renowned Amsterdam scholar Manasseh Ben Israel, a close friend of Rembrandt, which shows that the doctrine of reincarnation is a persistent error, especially where there is a refusal to acknowledge Jesus' work of redemption. The secret of Jesus' work of salvation was not known beforehand and explains that reincarnation played a significant part in the rabbinic discussion on the afterlife at the time:

> «« The belief or the doctrine of the transmigration [of souls] is a firm and infallible dogma accepted by the whole assemblage of our church with one accord, so that there is none to be found who would dare to deny it (…) Indeed, there is a great number of sages in Israel who hold firm to this doctrine so that they made it a dogma, a fundamental point of our religion. We are therefore in duty bound to obey and to accept this dogma with acclamation (…) as the truth of it has been incontestably demonstrated by the Zohar, and all books of the Kabalists. »»

APPENDIX 24

Hospital dumps Dead Baby in Rubbish

The Dutch daily newspaper "De Telegraaf" of 16th July 1997 carried the following report (reproduced here in its entirety) under the headline "Hospital dumps dead baby in rubbish". The article was written by the reporter René Steenhorst. Within a week of this article being published a shock wave of reactions in the national press persuaded the Health Inspection Service to set up an official enquiry into the way Dutch hospitals and pathology laboratories deal with the remains of foetuses and babies that come into the world dead.

This discussion is illustrative of the lack of respect for life in our society, but also with regard to the government-sanctioned attitude toward nascent human life, an attitude which witnesses to a very sad mentality. The blasphemous abortion legislation is an extension of it. The developments in the months following this incident have proven that the lax way of behaving is not an isolated case. Which should not come as a surprise. The one fits with the other.

«« Doctors working in the Oosterschelde Hospital in Goes appear to have dumped in the hospital refuse the mortal remains of a baby born dead. Instead of being cremated, as the parents had been promised, the baby was destroyed at the Rijnmond waste disposal facility.

Annelies and Ruud Stornebrink of Bergen op Zoom, the parents of the baby Ilona, made this ghastly discovery a short time ago after the mother had made enquiries at the hospital as to the whereabouts of her dead child's ashes.

"Immediately after the birth I was allowed to hold Ilona in order to say good-bye to her", says the anguished Annelies Stornebrink (34), who works as a group leader in the mental health care sector. *"The child was perfect: ten little fingers, ten tiny toes, eyes, a nose and a little mouth. I even have a photo of her and regard her as my child. She was too beautiful to be thrown away like a piece of rubbish. We are both absolutely distraught."*

Formally the hospital cannot be blamed. The medical lawyer Mr. P.A.M.M. Dingemans (Breda), engaged by the parents, had to admit that this was so. The legislation covering the care of corpses states that a dead foetus or baby has to be cremated or buried if the pregnancy has lasted for 24 weeks or more or, if the duration of the pregnancy is not known, if the baby weighs at least 500 grams.

Yet Ilona Stornebrink died after 19 weeks, and so, under the terms of the law, is considered a medically provoked 'abortion'. The counting of 19 weeks pregnancy accords with 120 days after conception, which is our focus of interest.

Nonetheless Mr Dingemans called the hospital's behaviour totally distasteful. *"I will most certainly make my objections known to the hospital. This should never have happened. And certainly not after a promise had been made to cremate the baby."*

The desire to know where Ilona's ashes had been scattered arose when the Stornebrinks saw their two other daughters - Elouise aged nine and Jamie aged two - growing up. Says Annelies: *"We were always making comparisons: Ilona could have been like that too. Our grief increased, as did the need to visit the*

place where something of her still remained. That's why I finally got in touch with the hospital. I have never been so shocked in my life. They acted as if I ought to know what usually happens to foetuses born dead…"

Mr Dingemans comments: *"I regard this sordid affair as a typical case of collective blindness, and I intend to ask the politicians to take note of it: the 'material' was submitted to post-mortem examination and then simply dumped. This mechanistic attitude to human tissue is unworthy of a hospital."*

The complaints officer at the Oosterschelde hospital, Mrs. A. Liem-Buirma, stated that she could well understand the parents' grief. *"The fact that we acted according to the law does not take away the pain. On the contrary: it simply should not have happened. (...) We intend to contact the parents and also the Zeeland pathology laboratory: perhaps some mistake was made there. Over the last few years we happen to have worked out a policy designed to prevent this sort of unhappy occurrence. We have even made arrangements with the undertakers that a funeral be held for a foetus only a few weeks old."* »»